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J. B. Finley

MEMORIALS

OF

PRISON LIFE.

BY

REV. JAMES B. FINLEY.

EDITED BY

REV. B. F. TEFFT, D. D.

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PREFACE.

The following work, kind reader, was not premeditated, when I accepted the appointment of chaplain to the penitentiary of Ohio; but it came into my mind, at first, as a mere suggestion, and grew up into its present form by the force of circumstances, rather than from calculation. Having formed, many years ago, the habit of journalizing the principal events of my life, I found myself at my old practice soon after entering upon my duties in the prison: every thing in relation to the prisoners, to the officers, to the discipline of the institution, and to whatever stood connected with it, without any particular intention, was recorded; and, in this way, by the time I had been one year in my new position I had amassed matter enough, if printed as it was first written, for a large volume. These materials became, from time to time, and altogether accidentally, the topics of conversation among my personal friends; and several of them, among whom were Col. Dewey, Dr. Charles Elliott, and Hon. John M'Lean, either suggested or approved the idea of publishing a book. By these and similar influences, I was led to entertain the project so far as to carry my manuscript to Cincinnati, and take the advice of several of my friends residing there. Committing it, for a short time, to the inspection of my friend, Rev. Dr. Tefft, I received it again with that gentleman's warm approval of the project of publication, by which I was finally determined; and, almost immediately, the task of revision was undertaken, and constantly persevered in, till my materials assumed the form in which they now appear.

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In regard to the matter of the volume, I feel at liberty to say, that every word of it can be relied on as fact; and I have endeavored, by the exercise of some care, to have as few errors of opinion as would be possible in such a work. It is possible, that, in the labor of transcribing, some things may have taken a shade not contemplated in the first draft; but everywhere, it has been my design to adhere strictly to the facts as I knew them, without coloring a single incident for effect. The truth of it is, the facts themselves, which came to light during a protracted residence in one of our great penitentiaries, are sufficiently pungent and thrilling, without the help of fiction; and the nearer a writer can come to the realities actually around him, the more graphic, as well as instructive, will be his book. Such, at least, was my firm conviction in the preparation of these pages; and I have, consequently, endeavored to relate what I saw, and heard, and experienced, during my first year as chaplain of the Ohio state prison.

Respecting the manner of my unpretending production, I have nothing, of any consequence, to say; for my mind has been so much more intent on the substance than on the form of it, that I scarcely feel qualified to speak. In point of style, I have had no ambition to shine as a writer, my chief object being so to set forth my thoughts, as to be clearly and easily understood. Beyond this I have made no attempts. Though some parts of the work may seem to have been written with some design toward dramatic interest, nothing was farther from my thoughts; for those pages, where this appearance will be most plausibly presented to the reader, fell as naturally into their present shape, as the most desultory conversation ever undertaken by a knot of "talking men." I felt at liberty, of course, to correct the grammatical and rhetorical blemishes of several of the prisoners' letters, which are incorporated in my work; though some of them are given almost word for word as I

received them from their respective authors—the propriety of which, all, I presume, will understand.

There is one part of my labors, while in connection with the penitentiary, to which I look back with unusual interest. I refer to the co-operation of the officers, particularly the higher officers, in the work of spreading the spirit of evangelical religion among the prisoners. In many institutions of this character, there is a coldness manifested toward the chaplain, as if he were there only by courtesy, or concession, and not to do a great and welcome duty to the bodies and souls of lost men. There is nothing of this feeling in the state prison of Ohio. There was not, at least, while I was there; and, having given my testimony fully and explicitly, in the body of this work, to the generous and Christian character of the warden, Col. Dewey, I must here add, that the deputy warden, Capt. Bradford, was equally kind, equally liberal, equally co-operative, and equally solicitous for my success in giving root and growth to religion upon the soil we cultivated. Never, perhaps, in any part of the world, was there a set of officers, having the management of a prison, who possessed and manifested more of the spirit of Christian philanthropy toward their degenerate but important charge, than the officers of this institution. Their reward is certain.

I must, also, here express my gratitude to another class of my co-laborers. When I first entered upon my duties, I made particular examination of the library, if I may call that a library, which consisted of so few and so unimportant books. My soul was pained. I resolved, in the name of humanity, that this great means of good should not remain thus. On expressing my feelings to the warden, and other officers, I found that they had had similar compunctions; and we thereupon started a subscription, before quitting the subject of conversation, for the purpose of adding to our library stock. To this measure the contractors, as well as

the officers, contributed most generously. The citizens of Columbus nobly followed their example. I then felt encouraged to visit Cincinnati for the same object. The Cincinnatians fairly loaded me down with books. Subsequently I got into my buggy, and rode from town to town, and from house to house, everywhere calling upon the people for such *good* works as they felt willing to give. Never was I turned away entirely empty from any man's door. Never in my life have I seen a charity so cheerfully and bountifully supplied. It seemed to do the people good to give. And so it did. It always does us good; and the books thus collected have effected a complete revolution among the prisoners respecting their intellectual habits Before, the moment they were turned loose into their cells, they were idle, or employed in secret vices, or carried away with plans of escape. Now, as soon as they are free from manual toil, the greater part of them occupy their minds in the perusal of good books, which not only stimulates and rouses up their intellectual life, but thereby gives it the ascendency over their physical passions, by which their moral powers are put into a state of freedom favorable to the growth and elevation of the moral life. No man, who has not seen the revolution here referred to, will be able to realize, precisely and fully, how great a one it is; but, from continued observation, I can emphatically say to every prison on the earth—"Give the prisoners books!"

In looking over the sheets, after they had come from press, I discovered a few errors which had escaped my observation till that time. This could be easily accounted for, were the errors of sufficient magnitude to require, or justify, the trouble; but, after a careful examination, I do not find one of any consequence to the public. The few slips of memory, to which I now refer, have only the personal effect of reminding me, that I am gradually verging into the sear of age; and, with this thought upon my

heart, I would here, in conclusion, beg the reader, not only to pardon all my deficiencies, but to be careful on his own account to make, for his latter years, and for the world to come, a foundation that never can be moved. Let reader and writer both remember, that, "Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Eaton, January, 1850

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MEMORIALS

OF

PRISON LIFE.

CHAPTER I.

Appeal to fathers and mothers, legislators and senators—The penitentiary of a state—A momentous question—What is the end to be attained by imprisonment?—Three theories proposed—John Howard—The congregate system—The separate system—Each has its abettors—The author's system.

Will the reader sit down with an aged man, who has seen nearly his threescore years and ten—who has lived to witness the rising and falling of many in this world—who has observed much and reflected long on the causes of good and evil fortune in the affairs of mankind at large, and listen to a series of revelations which he has now to make of the miseries resulting inevitably from crime? Will the fathers and mothers of the land honor me with a patient hearing, while I lay before them the certain results of bad example, of bad instructions, of bad household government? Will the sons and daughters, now in the bloom of youth, and hope, and happiness, sit by the old man's side, that they may hear of the latter end of those who despise the instruction of their earthly parents, and deliver themselves up to the counsels of the ungodly? Will the teachers of our country favor me with a listening ear, that the wisdom to be derived from other men's painful experience may be coupled with their own, in building up the character and prospects of the rising generations? Will the legislators, the philosophers, the philanthropists of America, and of other countries, so far condescend as

to hear words from the mouth of one so humble, which, if wrought over by their higher judgment, may effect something toward the elucidation of important questions, not only in reference to prison discipline, but particularly in relation to numerous social evils and the methods of removing them?

The penitentiary of a state is the centre to which all the rank iniquity of that state converges, or tends to converge. It is, therefore, the point at which to station one's self, when about to investigate the darker side of social life, in contrast with the brighter side. Within the walls of a prison are generally some of the worst and some of the best men found—the former as criminals bereft of their liberty, the latter as guardians and instructors, whose moral characters, it is supposed, have recommended them to public regard as persons to whom may be safely committed the final execution of the laws. The two extremes of society here often meet; and the student of human nature, of civilization, of the laws, and manners, and customs of a people, will be able to trace from this focus consequences to their causes, punishments to their crimes, and crimes to their small beginnings in early life, not only clearly and satisfactorily, but in a way that shall open up the hidden laws of education, the secret influences of example, and the actual condition of society where these seeds of iniquity are sown, in a very direct and philosophical manner.

There is a single question, also, now extensively agitated throughout the civilized world, respecting the exact objects to be reached after in depriving criminals of their liberty, which can be studied and answered best within the precincts of a prison. Upon this question there are now three theories in vogue. One theory is, that all imprisonment is for the sake of punishment; and the practical conclusion from it is, that the severer and more certain the punishment, the more sure it is to deter from crime. The second theory

on the contrary, begins by asserting, that all punishment, properly understood, is for the improvement of the culprit, and, consequently, all its rigors should be softened down by the spirit of unmixed love. The third and last theory takes a middle position between the other two, maintaining, that, as there are two parties in the case, so there are two sides to be looked at; that society is to be defended against the probable repetition of unpunished crimes; and that this is to be done in a way most likely, at the same time, to benefit the criminal but unfortunate victim of the law.

It is well known, that, until the days of the immortal John Howard, the first of the above theories was universally in use. Convicts were supposed to have forfeited, not only their rights as citizens, but their rights as men. They were thrust into dungeons, where no light came—where no friend visited them—where they were soon so far forgotten that often the world could not tell whether they were alive or dead. Personages of the highest distinction, for faults almost venial in our day, would thus spend a lifetime, without a single exertion being made by the public to understand their case. This was unmixed punishment; and all society acquiesced in the practice, until Howard, by visiting and revealing the unseen and unconceived horrors of these dungeons, wrought a revolution, the influence of which is felt to the present day.

But, as is often the case, that influence was at first only a violent reaction. The doctrine then sprang up, for the first time, that imprisonment must always be based on the principle of pure benevolence to the imprisoned; that punishment, as such, whether for the benefit of society, or for any other purpose, is opposed to the genius of Christianity as it is expressed in the golden rule; and that the reformation of the offender, by correcting his physical health and habits, by giving him useful intellectual culture, by forming a moral character for him on the basis of the Gospel, is

the Alpha and Omega of the authority of the law. Several experiments of prisons conducted on this foundation have been made in different countries, and always with the same results. Whereas, under the operation of the first theory, society was vigorously defended, but at the expense of all benevolence and humanity, under this second dispensation, the offender was exclusively cared for at the risk of upturning the very groundwork of society, and reducing all law and order to a mere nullity. The evils of this system were, happily, soon apparent. The poor father, whose exertions had not been sufficient to keep his children far above the risk of starvation, or whose neglect of their education had precipitated them into juvenile criminality, with all his pain, was really relieved at heart, when he saw one or more of his troublesome progeny condemned, for some early sin against the state, to pass several years in one of these Houses of Correction. They would there receive attentions denied them at home. Their physical, and intellectual, and moral wants would all be attended to in this place of improvement. Punishment became at once such a blessing, that many offenses were committed by the poor expressly for the sake of it; society was thus paying a premium on crime, and encouraging the infraction of its own regulations; justice was made the scourge of the community, instead of being a terror to evil-doers; and immorality was continually increasing, and that at the very fountain-head of society—the rising generation—by the very efforts intended to repress it.

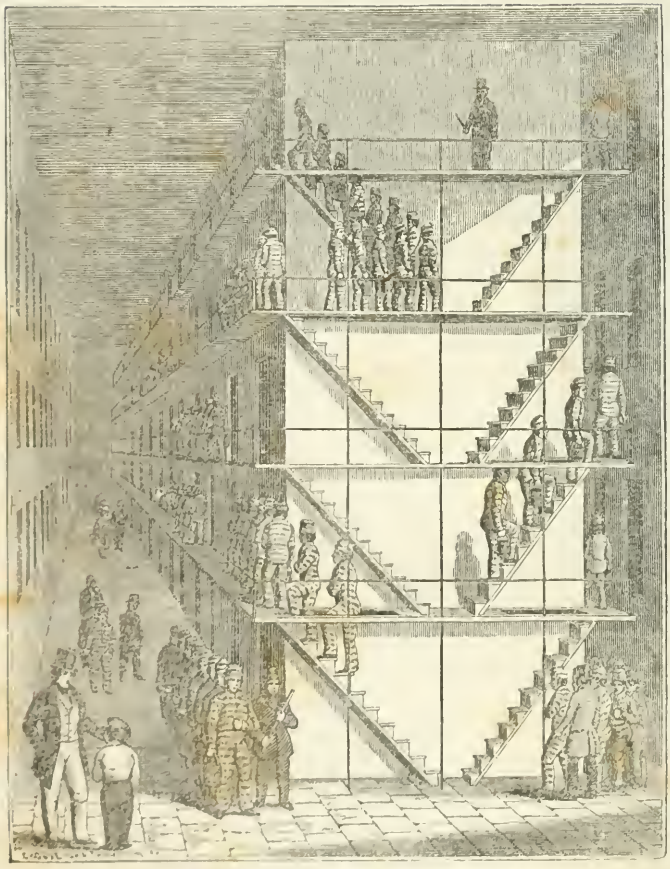
So soon as the public mind began to recover from this infatuation, not being able to go back again to the doctrine of unmixed punishment, it gradually fell upon a middle ground, as being the one most probably correct. Works were written; experiments were made, in this country and in Europe; and the consequence was, that the mixed theory, as it might be most properly denominated, was

authoritatively established. In nearly all prisons, in most civilized lands, the culprit is now punished for his crimes, and society is so far defended against the repetition of such injuries; and, at the same time, the criminal himself is so treated, that his punishment will be most likely to have a salutary effect upon his character in after life.

It is true, there are yet two systems of prison discipline still in use; but both claim to have the two parties—the criminal and society—equally in view. The congregate system, going on the supposition, that habits of labor and moral character are the chief desiderata among this class of men, set them to work at those trades for which their physical and mental powers, together with the consideration of their former occupations, may more especially adapt them; religious instruction is also given them by men appointed expressly for the purpose; and they are permitted to labor in large communities, where they can see but not converse with each other, as the friends of this system imagine that social intercourse, of some kind and to some extent, is almost as necessary to man as food. The separate system, on the other hand, looking upon all intercourse between criminals as only evil in its tendency, by which one rogue becomes the instructor or accomplice of another, secludes the convicts from each other but, to atone for this defect, it encourages the visits of good men to the cells of the prisoners; and the officers of these prisons make it a particular point of duty to visit the inmates very frequently themselves. The physical habits of the imprisoned are provided for by such trades as can be carried on by individual industry; a teacher is employed to lead them on in the study of useful branches of education; while the Gospel is regularly taught them, not only by sermons on the Sabbath, but by the private efforts of the chaplain in his daily rounds.

Each of these two systems has its ardent friends; and

each presents objections, urged often with great spirit against the other; but, in giving to the world my reflections and observations, I have no cause to advocate but the cause of justice and humanity combined. I have no hobbies to ride; I have no ulterior end in view; but I sit down merely to record what I have seen and heard. While I shall endeavor to furnish materials for profound meditation, to all the several classes mentioned on a previous page, the reader must not expect me to decide controverted questions for him; but he must make all such practical application of the facts here given for himself. My aim is to be an unprejudiced witness; and the public, in relation to every thing I may say, must be both the jury and the judge.



CONVICTS RETIRING TO THEIR CELLS.

CHAPTER II.

A look through the prison—Misery and degradation—Striped clothes—The prison Sabbath school—The hospital—A melancholy incident—Mistaken parents—First Sabbath in the penitentiary—Sermon—Interesting spectacle—Talk with the warden—Visit to the female department—Four whites, three blacks—Tuesday—Private meditation—Wednesday—Second visit to the hospital—Deep depravity—Dark prospect—Another call on the female department—An affecting case—A history of wretchedness—Admonition to parents—Sermon in the outer hall—A weeping penitent—A day in the country—Secret prayer for the prisoners—Teaching them to read—Want of intellectual culture—*Showering* convicts—New lodgings—"Confessions" of a murderer—Pernicious publications—Smith on Universalism—End of the first week.

On the second day of April, 1846, I commenced my labors as chaplain in the penitentiary of Ohio. In company with Rev. Granville Moody and Dr. Gard, I passed through every part of the spacious prison. The workshops, the cells, and eating halls, were among the first and principal objects of my attention.

Having never before been within the walls of this institution, the sight of the degradation and misery, which here became apparent, greatly affected me. Often had I attempted to describe, in the public congregation, this latter end of vice; but what I now beheld beggared all description. Here were all ranks and ages, from the man of high life to the meanest pickpocket, from the gray-haired man of eighty down to the boy of fourteen years. They were all dressed in striped clothing; all seemed depressed and broken down in spirits; all were silently at work, without the hope of remuneration, under the inspection of well-appointed watchers. A dark cloud of melancholy, betokening the anguish of their meditations, was settled on every countenance. "O, my God!" I inwardly exclaimed, "what a life, what a condition, for an immortal creature!"

On the following Sabbath (April 5) I visited the Sabbath

school, where I found about fifty in attendance. Being invited to open the exercises with prayer, I knelt down and found free access to the throne of God in behalf of my new and interesting charge. Going next to the hospital, I found many sick; and the gloom of this prison scene seemed here to gather unmixed blackness. Sickness, in itself an evil, was doubly so with those, who had but little care for either life or death; and from this moment I observed, that the virtue of the best of medical aid lost much of its power to heal, in men whose thoughts were so little prepared to buoy up the body when failing with disease.

Among the number here described, I saw the son of a former friend. He was the youngest of his father's family, once a sprightly, promising, happy boy, the idol of fond parents, who, to my certain knowledge, had indulged the highest hopes of one day seeing him the ornament of society, and, among his fellows, a star of the first magnitude. But, reader, I think I know the great fault of these parents. They were too indulgent to their children. They gave them too much their own way in every thing. They spared correction and spoiled their child. O, how pitiful was the sight of that once lovely boy, now a prisoner, now dressed in the hated prisoner's garb, now caged with criminals of the blackest character! and the once quiet, cheerful, happy hearth, from which he came, thrown into disgrace, and wretchedness, and mourning! Let every parent, who reads these lines, remember the fate of this young man, and by what domestic mistake he came to this sad end! As I may allude to his case again, the reader will recognize him under the initial, P.

My first Sabbath in the penitentiary was one of great interest to me. Many of my old friends in the city came in to listen to my introductory discourse; most of the prisoners were out; and such a congregation as I then saw affected me most strangely. Taking my text in Luke xv, 2: "This

man receiveth sinners and eateth with them," I cast my case upon the Lord, and he helped me wonderfully. The offer of mercy and of full pardon was freely made to the repenting and returning prodigal. Many wept, and some were awakened, the latter giving evidence of their sincerity by the consistency of their future efforts for salvation.

Monday was spent chiefly in conversation with the warden in relation to the rules and regulation of the prison, the responsibilities and privileges of the chaplain, including, particularly, his opportunities of visiting and conversing with the convicts. Obtaining full satisfaction upon all these points, and finding that I had all the scope for doing good to the souls of my charge which could be safely granted, I concluded the day by a visit to the female department. Here I found seven females, four whites and three blacks, objects of pity, if such objects are to be seen anywhere. The four whites, astonishing to tell! had no look of degradation about them. They were all young, and fair, and even beautiful, making a striking contrast to the gloomy place in which I found them. All around these blooming young women were heard the grating of iron doors; before and behind them were the dark cells in which they were locked up at night; and on their faces, in spite of the beauty that marked their features, a cloud of deep remorse was resting. Remember, reader, these young women are daughters; they have parents; they once had friends and admirers!

Tuesday was devoted to private business, to meditation on the responsibilities of my new charge, and to prayer for God's blessing upon my labors. The day was closed by the perusal of Smith on Universalism, which soul-destroying doctrine the author exposes in a most glaring manner.

On Wednesday I undertook to get a more accurate idea of the condition of the prisoners. I first went to the hospital, where I read and expounded the Scriptures, and prayed with the suffering and almost hopeless patients

Some of them seemed tender in their feelings; while others looked upon me as an enemy—a spy upon their conduct—a wolf in sheep's clothing. With a heavy heart at finding such sentiments in those, whom it was my sole business and intention to benefit, I left them and visited again the female department, where I found the eldest of the three women sick and desponding. I conversed freely with her on the state of her soul. At first she seemed sullen, and was disinclined to converse with me; but afterward her heart was somehow touched, and she wept bitterly. She gave me, at length, a brief account of her former life, in nearly these words: "I once had loving parents, a good home, and fine prospects, in a worldly point of view. When quite young, I sought and experienced a change of heart, and tried to live religiously. I was then happy, happy in the pardoning love of God, from day to day. But I married a wicked man. I lost my faith, my devotion, my happiness in religion. Not wishing to return injury upon him I once loved and trusted, ay, trusted too far, I can only say, I am now in this frightful place in consequence of having married an irreligious man." And here her emotion was excessive. Let her example be a warning to her sex generally. Let parents think of it, when about to give away their religiously-educated daughters to men whose hearts have not been purified by the power of religion. Having prayed with and exhorted the weeping woman in general terms, I entreated her particularly to return to that God whom she had so ungratefully and wickedly abandoned, encouraging her that there was mercy as well as pardon in heaven to meet her case and restore her again to peace and even happiness. She promised to follow my advice by seeking the Lord from that moment. All the women wept excepting the eldest of the three blacks, who was a hardened and wretched being.

Returning to the hospital, and standing in the outer hall, I expounded this text, "Wilt thou be made whole?" There

was one person, in the group, who seemed to be in deep distress. After finishing my discourse, I approached this individual, putting to him the question, "Wilt *thou* be made whole?" He wept profusely, and, with great anguish and bitterness of spirit, "No, no," said he; "the day of grace is past with me." I showed him the great compassion of the Savior, his willingness to save all who come unto him, and his most gracious promises to the greatest of sinners. Finally, this man was prevailed on to make another trial of God's mercy, to abandon his disbelief, to seek salvation by repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, and to hope in the possibility of pardon. As I was leaving the room, after having talked with the other prisoners, this wretched man followed me to the door, and besought me to come to his cell, and teach him the way of salvation more perfectly. O, how I felt for him!

Thursday was spent in the country, where Rev. Mr. Conrey had invited me to preach to his people. I here found several old brethren, and, among them, a preacher to whom I gave license to preach, in 1819. How happy it makes an old man, to meet with the friends and comrades of his former years!

On Friday morning I awoke about four o'clock, and found my soul in close communion with God, and in ardent prayer for these poor spirits in prison. I could no longer rest, but arose, went to the hospital, and read a portion of God's word to the sick, throwing out such expository hints as occurred to me at the moment. I exhorted them not to delay one minute the work of repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. On going thence into the female department, I made special examination of their early advantages for education, and found that the majority of them could neither read nor write. From this moment I began to give them lessons in reading and writing, in addition to my regular duties to them. I was forcibly

struck, not only here, but everywhere among the prisoners, with the fact, that the neglect of even intellectual culture is often the first step to vice. Most convicts are not only uneducated, but men of inferior mind; and every thing which tends, like a sound education, to expand the faculties and enlarge their reach of comprehension, goes far toward raising mankind above the base temptations and low trickery of crime. To this point I call the special attention of legislators and of teachers.

As I returned from the hospital the guards and other officers were inflicting the punishment, technically called *showering*, to eleven of the prisoners, for a breach of rules. This operation, which is one of the most terrible to the prisoners, generally, may need description. The prisoner is tied to a plank. His feet are confined at the bottom, and the head is held to its place by a sort of head-stall, so that he can move neither head, nor feet, nor hands, nor any part of his body. He is absolutely pinioned to his place. The plank is set upright. From above the poor victim there comes down a spout of cold water, about half an inch in diameter, with tremendous force, directly on his naked head. No one, without experience, knows any thing of the torture of this infliction. Men of great physical strength will endure it for some time, without giving signs of pain; but most prisoners look upon this punishment with inexpressible horror. I may add, that it has recently, in many prisons, taken the place of whipping; but the reader must decide upon its merits as a mode of punishment.

Saturday morning found me early at the prison. I had obtained the privilege, through the solicitation of my kind friend, General Patterson, of boarding in the family of the warden, so that I might be as little separated from my interesting charge as possible. This day I moved into my new quarters, which I solemnly dedicated to God, kneeling upon my knees. As the Sabbath was approaching, I spent

the remaining hours in reading the Scriptures, in prayer, and in meditation, except a short time devoted to the perusal of the "Confession of Thomas Dean, hung at Chillicothe, for the murder of Edwards." I was induced to read this tract from the consideration, that it treated of a subject (crime) now become the object of my study; but, in laying it aside, I felt bound to set it down as a most pernicious book, as are nearly all publications of this sort. Instead of deterring from vice, they teach the ways of iniquity to old and young; and there is almost always such an attempt at the heroic, in these works, that the youthful mind, in particular, which we most wish to guard from such things, is very likely to be led into a secret admiration of the deeds described, in spite of the glaring criminality of the man.

In the evening I read a few more pages of Smith on Universalism. I must record again my high estimate of this book. Universalism has been the means of bringing many of my miserable charge to their present ruin; and I feel called upon to give it my most severe rebuke, from this Golgotha, where the skulls of its slain victims are so profusely strown.

Having now given a synopsis of the labors of my first week, I lay down the pen, for a short time, entreating my indulgent reader to meditate on the topics herein presented, with a special view to the great interests of society, as involved in the perpetration and punishment of crime.

CHAPTER III.

Morning meditations—Conversation with a female convict—Public service—Talk with a weeping youth—His descent to ruin—Sabbath-breaking and murder—A second youthful murderer—The hospital—Visit to the prisoners in their cells—Distribution of tracts—The poor orphan—Full-grown infidels—Bad books—A young Catholic learning to read—His thoughts on religion and prayer—Bad company—Disobedience to parents the beginning of evil—A reprobate—Conversation and prayer—A happy prisoner—A persecuted youth—A disputer—A reformed and converted drunkard—Confession of a ruined lawyer—Meeting at Wesley chapel—Reinforcement from Cincinnati—Vicissitudes of the world—Personal illness—Visit from one of the guard—An anecdote—Effect of diet—Another new-comer—Convict discharged—An affecting time.

This morning (Sabbath, April 12) I arose early, after a comfortable night's rest, and offered my customary sacrifice to God, praying especially for his grace to prepare me for the labors of the day. My soul was particularly drawn out in supplication for my new charge, that the word dispensed might convince their understandings, and melt their hearts, and bring them to immediate action in the work of repentance and faith toward God.

Before entering upon the public duties of the day, I had a conversation with one of the females, who seemed to be greatly broken up, weeping and saying that she had committed the sin against the Holy Ghost, and that there remained no more sacrifice for sin. I endeavored to encourage her with the promises of God to all who believe on the name of Jesus; and, with some emphasis, I exhorted her to immediate prayer. "This," said she, "is a poor place for devotion." "Any place," I replied, "is acceptable to God, and should be equally so to us. Besides, this is God's time, the day of salvation to you, provided you repent and believe his word." She seemed to assent, after this, to what I said.

In the public congregation I had an open time. I felt that God watered my own soul while I labored in his vineyard. After preaching I visited several of the prisoners, and among the rest a young man, whom I will call R., aged sixteen years, committed for manslaughter. I found him weeping and reading his Bible. I conversed with him freely, and tried to show him the exceeding sinfulness of sin. He told me about his mother, whose heart he had broken, and for whose sake he regretted his conduct more than for his own. He spoke, too, of the Sabbath school which he had been accustomed to attend. Let me give my young reader the tale, told me with tears by this unfortunate and guilty youth. "One of my schoolmates and myself," said he, "had been at Sabbath school that fatal morning. On returning home, we were induced to accompany several other boys to a saw-mill not far off. On our arrival we fell to jumping, then to quarreling, at last to fighting. I struck my mate a blow, with no intent to kill, but, as I thought, in self-defense; but, no sooner did he receive it, than he fell to rise no more. This," continued the lad, still weeping—"this came from Sabbath-breaking." Yes, had he gone directly home, and read his book, or returned with his parents to Church at the proper hour, he had not murdered his playmate, and he would not have been shut up in this gloomy prison, far from his friends and home. Now, his parents, his family, his friends, have received a wound which time can never heal; and he, poor fellow! will never rise above this single act, but for ever carry the stain of it upon his reputation, and a tormenting recollection of it in his heart. My young friends, keep the Sabbath, and you will save yourselves from many ills.

I then called upon another boy. He, too, was here for manslaughter; but his crime was certainly different in a moral point of view. A burglar broke into his mother's house in the night, and on being ordered to retire refused.

His object was, of course, not to steal. The reader will know what it was. The boy caught a gun, and his mother commanded him to fire. He did so. The man died in a few days. The mother and the son were both committed for the crime. I will not speak of the justice of this commitment; the public must decide. I found the boy a kind-hearted fellow, tender in his feelings, and penitent for his sins. I procured him a Bible. He promised to read it and pray to God every day. I have no doubt he did. These two boys I put into the Sabbath school, and tried to be a father to them in their evil day.

I went again, before dinner, to the female department, to pray with and catechise its inmates; and from here I proceeded to the hospital. Many were sick, some very sick, and all as gloomy as the grave. I endeavored to cheer them with the consolations of the Gospel, and, by raising their confidence in the power of medicine, to heal their bodies, provided their souls could get at rest. One individual was truly penitent.

After dinner I visited the prisoners in their cells. To one hundred and ten of them I, this day, distributed religious tracts and Bibles. Some professed to have found pardon of God while in prison. Others seemed to be under deep conviction of their sins. The way of salvation, according to the plainest Scriptures, was the topic most in my heart and on my tongue. Some had been reared by religious parents. Some were Catholics. These all seemed tender; but there was a large proportion, who had had no religious training in their younger days; and their hearts were as hard as adamant. Many of the latter had been left orphans, whose parents, while living, had taken good care of their morals; but, when bereaved of their natural watch-keepers, these orphans had been thrown into families who cared for nothing but money, or fashion, or fame, and gave themselves no concern for the welfare of these

destitute and afflicted ones. O, the poor orphan! How my heart bled for him this day! Which of all the parents, who may read these lines, knows that his own dear children may not soon be left as destitute as these? See to it, then, that you lay up for them the good opinion of society, and especially the favor of the Almighty, by showing kindness to those of this afflicted class, who may be living and struggling in your midst. Take the poor orphan by the hand and help him up. He may be a blessing to you, and to the world, in a future day.

I found some hardened infidels in these dungeon cells They were steeped in crime; and their souls were as hard as the granite rock. They had been cursed and ruined by bad books. The works of Paine, and Voltaire, and Volney, and Chubb, and Shaftesbury, and similar productions, had been eagerly devoured by some of them; and most of them had gone to infidelity through the convenient door-way of Universalism. What a fearful responsibility rests on those who make the reading of a nation or an age!

Here was a young Catholic. He was learning to read. He could just understand what he happened to be reading. "How do you like it?" said I to him, meaning his book, which was the Bible. "As far as I understand it, well," said he in reply. "Have you learned this much from it," I continued, "that none but Christ can forgive sins?" "Yes," he answered promptly, "and that Mother Church is wrong in many things, which I never could comprehend before—at least," he added, "if this book is true; and I believe it is." "I am glad," said I, "that you have begun to read the Bible." "Ah," exclaimed the poor fellow, "if I had been taught to read and reverence this book, which I could have carried with me when going beyond the reach and influence of religious instruction, I think I never should have been in such a place as this; and it is hard to reflect that our early instruction, for which we are not accountable,

by making sin so venial a thing that man can pardon it, tends to blind our minds, to corrupt our hearts, and to lead us into the paths of vice. But if I ever get out of this prison, I think I shall try to learn and know things for myself." This was the doctrine of private judgment asserted by one whom the opposite doctrine had greatly injured in body and in soul. This man had a clear head. I asked him if he had begun to pray to Christ for the pardon of his sins. "No," said he, "not yet; but I have prayed to the Virgin Mary, Christ's mother." I told him that she could not hear him; that she was dead and gone to heaven; and that, if she could hear him, she had no power to forgive his sins. "You must pray to God," said I, "who, for Christ's sake, will forgive you your trespasses." I directed his attention to the seventh chapter of Matthew, and, for the present, left him to consider upon what I had said.

Several of the young men, when I approached them, began to weep, and asked me, from the fullness of their hearts, to pray for them. One of them addressed me in nearly the following words: "I am here for the first offense I ever committed of the kind. I was led away by bad company; and, particularly, by disobedience to my parents, added to this evil influence from without, I have been brought to this dreadful place. My heart is broken for my poor parents. The bleeding heart of my mother is continually before me: I hear she is dying of a broken heart. O, my mother! my mother! my mother!" Covering his face with his pallid hands, he wept most bitterly. He was not the only one I found among the convicts, who traced his calamities to the sin of disobedience to parents. Many others told me a very similar tale. My youthful reader, listen to these piteous cries, look upon these falling tears, and think of these withering hearts. Remember, disobedience to parents was the first step in the downward road

Remember that, every time you disobey your parents, you take one step toward the dark, damp, doleful cell, where this young man, once as happy and as hopeful as you are, now dwells!

I found several to-day who had been religiously educated, but who, carried away by the spirit of the world, had forsaken prayer, their family duties, afterward public worship, and had gone, step by step, from the house of God to the regions of misery and despair. Ye who neglect your Christian duties, lay this to heart. Men never, or seldom, fall all at once: by gradual and almost imperceptible degrees, they let go their hold on God, and God relinquishes his supporting hand from them. Be careful of the first act of sin.

I passed to a cell where I found a man about twenty-four years of age, sitting with his arms folded across his breast. His countenance was deeply marked with care. A foreboding fear, interchanged with a look of fixed despair, settled upon his manly brow. "Young man," said I to him, "do you not feel bad?" "O yes, I do;" the young man replied. "Do you ever pray to God for comfort in your hours of loneliness and distress?" "No, I do not." "And what is your reason for neglecting so plain a duty, and so sweet a privilege?"

"I am a reprobate, made expressly to be damned."

"Then you think that some men are made to be lost?"

"Yes, I do."

"Where did you learn this doctrine?"

"Of my parents; and the Bible teaches it also."

"Why, then, are you so sad? If God decreed that you should be lost, then he decreed the means by which you are to reach that end; that is, he decreed that you should commit the crime for which you have been sent here. So you have been doing the will of God; nor could you help doing it. You have, consequently, done no wrong. Do

you, then, think that God will punish one of his creatures for doing his will—for doing what he could not help? Besides, the Bible plainly says that God would have all men to come to the knowledge of the truth. This doctrine of decrees, as you have stated it, is positively false: there is not one word of truth in it. Do you think that God can lie?"

"No."

"Well, then, God says, (Ezek. xxxiii, 12,) 'As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked.' Read this whole chapter. Compare it with all parts of the Bible. Christ died for all: the Spirit enlightens all: the Gospel invites all. The promises of God are to all that repent, forsake their sins, and believe on Christ. The Bible teaches a very different doctrine from what your parents taught you; and you ought to pray to God constantly, until you find the pardon of your sins."

"But, sir, the Bible says the prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord."

"You do not say that that declaration is in the Bible? If so, I have never seen it; and I rather imagine it is a specimen of fireside Scripture."

"I can show it to you, sir," said the man, suddenly picking up his Bible.

"No, you can't," said I; "and I will give you one week to consider the subject, and to find the passage."

O, what a soul-destroying doctrine! If it were true, no sinner, nay, no man on earth, could consistently pray to God; but one did pray and say, "God be merciful to me a sinner!" and God heard the prayer, and sent the poor man to his house justified. God commands, in more than one place, all men to pray, and that without ceasing. He has promised, too, to hear and answer the prayers of penitent sinners. You may now pray; you may knock at the door of mercy, and it shall be opened to you.

I left the man in a better state than that in which I found him. Hope began to spring up within him. He engaged with me to pray till he should find pardon.

In another cell I found P. rejoicing in hope. He had been, since I had seen him, deeply afflicted with a sense of his sins, and, especially, of the sin of abusing the instructions of his pious parents. After much crying to God, he had found peace, and could say, "Whereas he was once angry with me, his anger is now turned away, and he comforteth me." With a beautiful submissiveness of spirit, he said to me as I approached him, "I have no more complaints to make against Divine Providence, or against society. My punishment is just; and God, in his infinite mercy, has sanctified it to my good." Yes, reader, the man was as happy as any man, in or out of prison. Religion had poured its hallowed consolations into his once troubled soul. As I turned away from him I said to myself, "True enough, this man is happy in the Lord; and he now knows what the poet meant:

> 'And prisons would palaces prove,
> If Jesus would dwell with me there.'"

I found next a poor boy, who said he was trying to serve God and to pray; "but, father," said he, in a low tone of voice, "you cannot tell how much I suffer from the men in the next cell. They make fun of me; they persecute me at every opportunity." I encouraged him to do his duty and trust in God, telling him that they could not hurt him if he took care of himself. And so it is with us all, reader.

I then passed to the next neighbor of this boy. "How do you feel to-day?" said I. "O, very well," he replied. "Do you ever think of death, or of the welfare of your soul in a future state?" "No," said he promptly, "I know nothing about it; that is all hid from me, and I can, of course, have no care about it. God sent me into this world

without my consent, and, I suppose, to answer his own pleasure; and he will dispose of me as suits him best." The man seemed disposed to enter into an argument; but I told him that that was not my business. I added, that God created him for his own purposes, true enough; that one of those purposes was to love and serve his Creator; and that if he did not give himself up to God's service, he must be for ever miserable. "But give your whole heart to God," said I, "and you will then begin to know and realize the true end for which you were made." How sure it is, that if a man ever imbibes skeptical notions, he will either abandon them at once, or cling to them with more than common pertinacity in the hour of trouble! Look about you, reader, and see if this is not always so.

The next man I came to appeared to be very happy. He tried to get his hand through the iron grate to shake hands with me. "God has been merciful to me," said he; "and I am, I trust, a better man for having come to this prison. I was a drunkard; I got drunk whenever I could find an opportunity; and if I had been left at home last winter, I might have frozen to death on some of my drinking expeditions, and gone to hell. My reason was entirely gone in this particular: my appetite was my master. Often had I tried to reform, but always found myself an abject slave to my accursed appetite. But this prison, thank God! has been to me like a Total Abstinence Society. No sooner did I get here, and the whisky was all out of me, than I began to come to myself again—to see myself as I used to; and I saw myself, after so much of iniquity and crime, standing on the very brink of perdition, with no safety but in God. I began to pray. My sins seemed worse and worse the more I prayed, until I thought their weight would sink me to the grave, and after that, to hell. In this deep distress I cried more and more unto God; when, one night, it seemed to me that the cloud of gloom was beginning to

break away. Next I thought I could see the Savior's face and I laid, by an act of faith, these words upon my trembling heart, 'Thy sins are many, but I forgive them all. There came immediately into my heart such a flow of love, of peace, of joy, that I raised up erect, and shouted, to the top of my voice, 'Glory to God!' The guard came, and ordered me to keep still, or he would punish me. On hearing what I had to say, he said I was crazy; but I could neither believe him nor restrain my joy. From that night my dark cell has been the brightest that ever I saw; and I would not now exchange my feelings for the richest crown ever worn on a monarch's brow." That, reader, is true religion, though in a humble shape. It will give us comfort, sometimes rapture, in the darkest hours of adversity, and under the worst of trials.

The last man I visited this day had been well educated, had studied and practiced law, and had stood quite high in public esteem. "You see one now," said he, whose countenance was pale with thought and sorrow—"you see one, who refers his present calamity to the neglect of the single duty of reading God's word. I was brought up to read the Bible, to pray, to be religious; and, at one time, religious duties were a great pleasure to me; but, becoming a politician, I first left off reading the Scriptures, next omitted prayer, then lost my religious feeling, and, last of all, slid into bad habits, into one species of criminality after another, till here I am. Had I only kept up the single habit of perusing daily the word of God, all else would have remained right, and I should not have been lost. Go, dear sir, tell every Christian you meet, especially the young in religious ways, never to give up or neglect this glorious duty and privilege. O, could I stand on the dome or walls of this mighty prison, I would ask of God to give me a voice that could be heard all round the globe. And what do you think I would say? I would cry, sir, to all the

world, 'The Bible—the Bible—read it—read it—read it, and ye shall live!'"

Such, reader, is a specimen of the charge which God's providence has committed to my care. A prison, you perceive, is a little world. You find in it every species of character and disposition, with all the varieties of truth and error which we witness in our daily walk. You may here profitably study the great world in the miniature which will be presented in our successive chapters.

At the close of this day I went to my room, weary and sad; but, on presenting my cause to the ear of the Almighty, my heart was encouraged, my mind was refreshed, and I laid me down to a most peaceful night's rest.

Monday, April 13, was spent at a protracted meeting, at Wesley Chapel, on the Scioto. There I saw several old friends, whom I had not seen for a great many years. There was also a young man there, whose father was a Quaker, but he was himself a Methodist—a burning and shining youth. Alas, how many thus begin their Christian life, but soon end in darkness and in sin! We know no young man, nor, indeed, any man, till he is fairly tried.

Tuesday, April 14. Eight new-comers were this morning added to my charge, from Cincinnati. One of them had been here before. They all pretended to be in high spirits, seeming to care nothing about their situation. Poor fellows! they will feel differently, after they have been here a few months.

I visited the hospital. Some have gone to their work, while others had become sick, and taken their place. So it is in the big world, only we do not get behind the curtain so easily as here, to see how it goes. When we reflect the most profoundly on the shifting scenes of this "gay world," as it is called, how the spirit falls and the heart sickens at the sight! What changes have I witnessed for these three-score years! I have seen those who commenced life in a

log cabin—who were so poor that they could scarcely get the necessaries of life—made suddenly or gradually rich; and they have lived to despise the very condition from which they sprung. I have seen, too, those born in affluence, who looked with great haughtiness over the heads of the poor; but, on becoming poor themselves, they wished to be respected, and vainly tried to stand by the side of those from whose society they had fallen. But they were spurned away. How ridiculous, how wicked, how foolish, for any man to think more of himself, or of any one else, for the amount of money carried in the pocket!

For the two following days, Wednesday and Thursday, I was quite sick with a bilious attack. I was my own physician—bled myself—fainted—took boneset tea, and nursed myself. This I did, not because we had not a good physician in the prison, nor because he would not have been perfectly ready to do every thing for me in his power, but because for years I have been fearful of taking medicine; and when I prescribe for myself, I know what I am doing, and whether I need much or little physic. I am an old man, and I have long since learned, by observation in civilized as contrasted with savage life, that the health and lives of thousands are annually sacrificed to the stupid practice of depending on medicine too much. Did we take care of ourselves, we should need medicine but seldom; and when we did, simple remedies would answer. We do not learn that the antediluvians, who lived to such ages, had any doctors at all; and the old patriarchs after the Flood preserved their health and protracted their lives by temperance, good air, abundant exercise, and a calm trust in God. The most of modern diseases come from the bad habits of what we call civilized society. Let us become really civilized, and live according to good sense and observation, and ninety-nine out of every hundred of our physicians might be dismissed, to engage in some other employment.

While I was lying on my bed, in a convalescent and rather comfortable condition, one of the guard came in, and related to me several anecdotes about the prisoners; and the reader knows, it may be, how pleasant it is, in such a situation, when all danger is passed, and when we are not able to engage in more active duties, to give the mind up to conversation on interesting topics. Most persons, I have been told, when recovering from sickness, fall into a poetic spirit; but I confess, for myself, that, at such times, I enjoy nothing better than to listen to instructive anecdotes and stories. Among the entertaining narratives related to me by this keeper, was an account of a very recent attempt, among three of the prisoners, to break the inclosure and escape. They had carried their plan so far, that two of the three could open their own doors. The third was to burst his open with an iron bar, which he had taken from the blacksmith shop. But, when the time came, he dared not make the effort, for fear the noise would rouse the keepers. The other two had made provision to cut through the roof, and let themselves down on the outside; but, fearing they should be discovered and shot down by the guard, they gave up their plan, when all was ready for execution. These men were once among the boldest of villains; but the diet, the temperance, the active and steady labor, and the moral discipline of a prison, soon softens down the most daring and reckless spirits, and sometimes operates a perfect change in their dispositions.

We learn, from the facts here daily presented, the great law, that the dispositions of men are made very much by their habits. Let a person eat much meat, feed abundantly, drink spirituous liquors, spend much time in idle and wicked conversation, and take no thought of governing or even checking his natural appetites, and he is almost sure to become a fearless, violent, ambitious villain; but take him, now, from the excessive indulgence of his animal propensi-

ties, oblige him to spend his time in silence, keep him from the use of spirits, let his diet be nourishing but not exciting, consisting chiefly of vegetables, then raise his mind to intellectual, moral, and religious topics, even though it be only occasionally, and the whole man begins to wear a new aspect—to feel a new current of emotions—to enjoy a serener and higher kind of being. Imprisonment, therefore, on any plan, is often a blessing to these desperate characters, some of whom go out reformed in soul, mind, and body. We see, too, that the world at large has a great interest in the habits of the people. Savages, who live mostly on flesh, are the most ferocious of mankind; while those nations and tribes which feed on vegetables, chiefly, are generally the most peaceable, docile, and intellectual. The free use of alcohol has done much, not only in killing off thousands on thousands of promising individuals, and in destroying the quiet and happiness of families, but, what is vastly worse, it has exerted an incalculable influence in barbarizing the human species. It has counteracted, to an alarming degree, the humanizing influences of learning and religion. The same is true of many of the common practices of civilized society; and never, no never, shall we see the triumph of peace, of right, of Christianity, until the daily habits of mankind shall undergo a thorough revolution. Could we all be put on prison fare, for the space of two or three generations, the world would ultimately be the better for it. Indeed, should society change places with the prisoners, so far as habits are concerned, taking to itself the regularity, and temperance, and sobriety of a good prison, and condemning the culprits of the country to quarter themselves in great houses, live on a sumptuous and exciting diet, hold intercourse with all manner of social evil, and suffer the consequences of this course of living, it would show itself quite as sensible as it now is. As it is, taking this world and the next together, so far as mere opportunity is

concerned, and saying nothing of previous disposition and nothing of guilt or innocence, the prisoner has the advantage.

April 17. This day another poor man was committed for life for the crime of murder. The deed was committed under the influence of liquor. The liquor was given him by a long-faced professor of religion, or some man of boasted morality, whom his neighbors had recommended to be a safe man to be intrusted with the damning work of indirectly robbing and murdering the human species!

Saturday, April 18. This morning I was much better in health, but fearful I should not be able to preach Christ crucified to-morrow to the poor prisoners. This was an interesting day to me, not only on account of God's presence, which I felt to be almost sensibly with me, but on account of a little incident that occurred in my room. One of the convicts had served out his time. He was now to be liberated. My interest in him, the reader can easily imagine, when I tell him that this youth had been appointed to take care of me in my sickness. He had been very kind, affectionate, and obliging. I had formed a great attachment to him. I had conversed with him a great deal about religion, about his former life, about his stay in the penitentiary, about his connections in the world, and about his intentions and prospects on getting his liberty. He had been very frank and candid. Up to the last minute of his confinement he served me faithfully. Knowing that he was shortly to be emancipated, I had watched his motions with great interest; and, as the joyful day, and hour, and moment approached, his movements drew my attention more especially. I had discovered, a day or two before, that he began to look more than commonly cheerful; that he walked with more sprightliness; that every thing seemed to wear a more pleasing aspect to him. He had passed five long years without having seen the green earth outside the walls of the gloomy prison. Now he was to go forth and enjoy the utmost free-

dom. Poor fellow! how I laid there in my bed, and followed him with my eye, and shed my tears of joy for him; I pictured to myself how he would feel when he should pass the big iron gate; when he should begin to govern his own steps again without a keeper at his back; when he should take the road that leads to his father's house; and when, with weeping eyes and broken heart—for his heart had been broken—he should stand at that father's door, and ask forgiveness of those he had so much injured, and disgraced, and offended. I saw, in fancy, his father draw coldly back for a few moments, doubting what course to pursue with a son just from prison. I saw, too, the mother of the boy, true to her nature, making no such doubts as to duty, but running and falling upon the neck of her child, and embracing him with a thousand kisses. "O, thank God," said I, while thus musing, "thank God, that the race of man is ennobled by that angelic being known under the hallowed name of mother!"

The moment of release came. A messenger was sent to my room to inform the lad that he was waited for in the office of the warden. O, reader, I cannot tell you how the poor fellow acted. He knew what was wanted of him. He came to me with tears in his eyes. He embraced me over and over, as if I had been his own father. He thanked me for the good advice I had given him, and said he would follow it. He thanked Providence that he had ever seen that prison. Covering his face with his arm, he walked out behind the messenger, weeping like an infant; and I, also, as soon as he had gone, shed tears abundantly, praying God to take care of him, and bring him safely to his father's dwelling.

CHAPTER IV.

Continued illness—Rev. Granville Moody—Nashville Christian Advocate—Slavery and its defenders—A sorrow-stricken sinner—The olden times—Chaplains—Desire for a revival—A preacher fallen—The ladder to hell—An Osage Indian—A talk from him—Conversation with him—Unconquered and unconquerable—A child of the Emerald Isle—Kindness.

Sabbath morning, April 19, dawned clear and beautiful. I was unable to take my place in the pulpit. Rev. Granville Moody, however, volunteered his services, and preached to the prisoners with great acceptability and profit. Many tears were shed under his sermon, and much good was done in the name of the Lord Jesus. There has been a growing of interest in the public mind for the welfare of the convicts; the people from the city come in more numerously; and there is a better influence exerted for them.

Nothing remarkable occurred in the prison during Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday of this week. My duties were not varied much from what they had been.

Friday, April 24. My health is perfectly restored. My soul has been kept in peace. This morning I read, in the Nashville *Christian* Advocate, what the editor thought, no doubt, would be a very witty taunt, to the effect, "that Rev. J. B. Finley is now just where he deserves to be—in the Ohio penitentiary." The uninitiated reader must be told, that I was born and raised in a slave state; that I became an enemy to slavery a great many years ago; that, at the General conference of 1844, held in the city of New York, I had the honor of offering the resolution by which a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church was virtually reproved for connecting himself with slavery; and that this little piece of *slang* grew out of the opposition thus produced in the mind of the pro-slavery editor of the above-named journal. Now, then, let me here say, that I would

rather spend my life in teaching the Gospel of God to these poor prisoners, than to die with my hands red with the blood of my fellow-men, or to drop the slave-whip to go to my last account, or to carry the consciences of those men, who, professing to be the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, can preach sermons, write books, and frame labored arguments from the Scriptures in favor of holding the souls and bodies of immortal men in bondage. Nay, I would rather take one of these cells as my last earthly residence, than to spend my life, as these southern ministers, and editors, and doctors of divinity do, in riveting the chains of the poor slave merely to gain the favor of a wicked generation and a gaping multitude! Go on, pleaders for iniquity! but you will one day come to a most fearful reckoning!

The last day of this week was a poor day for me. I was not well. But, toward night, I sallied into the great yard, where I can always find work enough. There I met a man whom I shall call L. I asked him about the state of his soul. The tears stood in his eyes. He said he felt bad. His body was emaciated and tottering to the grave. His soul, he said, was distressed and in every way unhappy. Looking into his pallid face, I exhorted him to apply to the great Physician, told him of his ability to heal both soul and body, and entreated him to refer his case to God. The poor fellow wept tears of emotion, if not of sorrow for his sins; and I really believe that he commenced heartily to seek the salvation of his soul.

From all I can learn, both from reading and observation, the idea of laboring for the spiritual regeneration of prisoners is comparatively new. Time was, indeed, when the convict was locked up as a being who had forfeited all the rights of man, or as a beast in human shape, who never had any rights to lose. For centuries after the light of Christianity shone upon the world, the consequences of the

old Pagan civilization were so rife, in society, that men were thrown into a dungeon and never thought of or cared for more. When chaplains were first appointed, they never dreamed of doing more than attending to the morals of the prisoners, not conceiving that the salvation of these poor men depended much upon the exertions of those appointed to teach them religious truth. The truth is, chaplains were sent to these places, in the first instances, rather to exert an influence in favor of good order and discipline, than to labor for the religious welfare of their charge. Religion itself, in those times, was very much in the hands of those who scarcely believed in the necessity of a change of heart; and then ministers, who belonged to the sects most popular in that day, received nearly all the appointments of this kind. Now, however, it is expected of a chaplain, that he will exert himself for the poor convicts just as he would for the people of a parish, or congregation, where he might be called to labor, so far as the circumstances of the case will allow; and I must here confess, that, during the many years of my ministry in the Church of God, I have never felt a stronger desire, nor labored harder, to obtain of God a season of revival, than while in this gloomy place. I have wanted to see here the outpouring of the spirit of the Lord. I have desired to hear the voice of penitence, of prayer, of praise, in all these doleful cells. I have longed to listen to the shouts of victory going up from every department—"The dead's alive and the lost is found!" I have asked God to send such power into the circumference of these rocky walls, that all work would be voluntarily given up; that prisoners and keepers would get down together upon their knees; that the work might go on and spread, till all hearts should be made to rejoice in the glorious salvation of our common Lord. Then we would go to work again with our souls full of love, of purity, and of joy. It is useless, it is wrong, reader, to allow yourself to thrust such grand

results entirely beyond the reach of your halting faith. Let us rather pray, that the Ohio penitentiary, and every other in this sin-cursed world, may become such a centre, such a focus, of the powers and influences of our holy religion, that no man could spend much time within their walls without going out a converted man. That, it seems to me, is the way to have "righteousness and peace kiss each other." May God in his mercy speed the advent of such a day!

The next one I met was C., who, I had been told, had been a preacher. He does not deny the statement, I believe. I accosted him affectionately, but decidedly:

"Well, C., you have fallen from grace?"

"O, yes," he replied, "and from a great height of enjoyment."

"Did you fall by a sudden temptation, or by a slow process?"

"By a slow process."

"What were your steps downward?"

"First, neglect of secret prayer, then of family prayer, next association with worldly and wicked men, immediately the love of money, consequently the violation of the holy Sabbath in my efforts to get rich, last of all, when beginning to be a little prosperous, a desire to enjoy the world's pleasure, which last particular led me on, till I fell into the company of lewd women. These, sir, are the rounds in the ladder down which I have traveled from a state of heavenly enjoyment almost to hell."

O, what a fall! Let the reader mark the successive steps. I have observed, through a long life, that his first sin is almost universally the first with all who take the downward road. This man has good talents and sound sense, now he has come to his reason. He says he is trying to get back to his lost estate again, but finds the way dark and difficult He thought, when he was first meditating a slight relaxation from the severity of Christian principle, that it would

be easy enough to regain any damage he might thereby suffer; but he tells me, what I have been told before, that sins thus deliberately committed, with the secret expectation of falling back, at last, on the known mercy of God, weigh like mountains on the guilty soul, while faith in that mercy, which had been so presumptuously relied on, is next to impossible. He says he has a faint glimmering of hope, now and then, and fain would trust in God to renew him to eternal life again; but he wishes me to warn all the world against these deliberate departures from the upright way. I left him with the prayer of the Psalmist of Israel in my mouth—"Save me from presumptuous sins!"

The next man I met was a true son of the forest. He is an Osage. He has been here a long time; but he is still an Indian, with all his native pride, and with the courage of a veteran warrior. The reader may be pleased to hear him talk a little: "Me good man. Sometimes me fight. Dese man [pointing to the guard] sometimes strike me. Me make war on him. My chief [meaning the warden] he good man. He no strike. Me no fight him. Me want to go home to my tribe. Me want to see my squaw and my sons. They be big warriors now, me think. My squaw very good. My tribe once big, now little, soon go out, like candle burn up. Me want to go and see my tribe before they all go out, like old camp-fire. Indian have hard time. White folks come, take all his land, all game, all fish, all every thing. Then they put Indian in prison, if he go take one little thing back again, when he starve and don't know where to get bread. His squaw starve. His children starve too. Indian cry to see all starve. Then he go hunt and find nothing. White folks kill all the game. Indian then go get something, little, to give squaw and children, for them not starve, and white man run after Indian, catch him, and send him here, where he think all time of his squaw, his children starve, and his big tribe all go out like camp-fire." There is a great

deal of natural eloquence in this fellow; and more truth than poetry in his complaints against the conduct of the whites. But I thought I could do him no better service than to point him to the Savior.

"Osage," said I, "do you love the Great Spirit?"

"Yes, me all love Great Spirit."

"Do you try to be good, and pray to him?"

"Yes, me talk great much with Great Spirit. Great Spirit hear me talk much. He love me. He love my tribe. Great Spirit good to Osage great much many moons. Osage love Great Spirit always—speak much to Great Spirit—make great heap much worship to Great Spirit."

"Did you ever pray to the Great Spirit's Son, who came here to die for us poor sinners?"

"No, me not know Great Spirit's Son. Me know him Great Spirit. He good to poor Indian—let him go up when he die to live in Great Spirit's house. Osage then have all much game—white man no kill all Indian's game; white man then love poor Indian."

After going into a pretty thorough explanation of the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, which the fellow readily comprehended, I left him for that time. He is, as I said, an unconquered son of the forest. No man can govern him but the warden, whom he seems to reverence, calling him his chief.

Next I fell in with B., a native of the Emerald Isle. He has no relations in this country. He is worn down with disease. He is a Catholic, and, consequently, almost perfectly ignorant of the Bible; but he has some convictions of sin, and an idea of the future state. I addressed him kindly, which seemed to rouse up the native impulses of his warm Irish heart. When I exhorted him to cease praying to the saints, and to make his wants known directly to his God, telling him that his heavenly Father was as willing to hear him as his priest, or even the Pope himself,

the idea seemed to astonish him. He, however, appeared to believe it. The tear started in his eye. I took it as a proof that my words had found a resting-place in his mind: and I was again impressed, as I have often been before, that the true way to reach the Catholic population of our country, and to turn them from the error of their way, is to treat them kindly, and win them to the truth by gentleness and love.

CHAPTER V.

Bishop Hamline—Rev. Mr. Moody—The Gospel desired—A life commitment—A soundly-converted man—Two steps in the road to ruin—Visit to the hospital—A young man from New England—His narrative—Sabbath-breaking—Crime—Warning to the young—Conversion can occur in prison—A forger and a burglar—Pathetic interview—Conversation and counsel—Hoary hairs—Dialogue on religion—Melancholy reflections—Danger of procrastination—Female department—Extreme obduracy—A fatalist—Another necessarian—Colloquy—Col. Dewey—Anniversary of the author's ministerial life.

My fourth week in the penitentiary dawned upon me in great serenity and beauty. The morning of the Sabbath (April 26) was exceedingly lovely. My recent illness was not entirely passed; but I was comfortable.

Bishop Hamline was preaching in Wesley Chapel this morning; so that Rev. Mr. Moody, who is always ready to help the needy, came to my assistance. His sermon was in demonstration of the Spirit and with power. It moved the assembly of prisoners in a wonderful manner. They wept universally; and, in passing out, most of them came round to shake us by the hand. It was a great satisfaction to see them thus thankful for the blessings of the Gospel. It is a mistake entertained by many, that prisoners are not interested in religious teaching. There never was a more attentive or more teachable congregation, than the one I am now describing. Many of them would live on one meal a day, rather than give up their religious privileges; and some, I really believe, would relinquish nearly every earthly comfort for it.

After dinner, this day, the warden sent for a man whom I wished much to see. I will call his name G. He is here for life. His crime was murder in the second degree—he having killed an associate in a drinking frolic. The warden related to me the story of the fight, while the messenger

was gone to bring him. In a previous recounter the man he killed had put out one of G.'s eyes. He now swore he would put out the other. G., on hearing the threat, and fearing it might be put in execution, which would throw him into perpetual and eternal darkness—a punishment equal to or worse than death—stabbed his antagonist, and he died.

The criminal was now brought in. His fame has filled the prison. Indeed, it has gone far beyond its walls. He is now evidently, without the shadow of a doubt, a very pious man. The discipline of the prison has wrought a complete revolution in his habits; and the Spirit of God has effected a still profounder revolution in the powers and faculties of his soul. There can be no deception, it seems to me, in his case. All the guards, and all the officers, who know how to detect hypocrisy without much chance of mistake, agree in testifying to the sincerity of the man. I examined him faithfully in doctrines and experience. I found him Scriptural throughout. His life, he says, is one continual flow of joy, excepting the pain he derives from the remembrance of his former life. O how he wept over his past follies! "Two things," said he, "grieve me more than all the rest. The first is, my long-continued disobedience to my parents. My mother, especially, I greatly abused. This, though I have sinned deeply, wonderfully, fearfully in later life—this was the first step to ruin; and it torments me daily, that my angelic mother was weighed down in sorrow to her grave by the premature and continued wickedness of her son. But," added the man, with a heavenly smile, "I shall see her before long in glory! She is now in heaven, resting sweetly in Abraham's bosom; and I hope she now knows that I have given my heart to God, and am penitent for my disobedience to her kind discipline. O I shall see her, I shall see her," continued the prisoner, lifting his hands and his eyes

to heaven—"I shall see her before many years in the kingdom of eternal glory!"

"But what," said I, "is the second error of your life, to which you just now referred?"

"Why, sir," replied the man, with great earnestness, "it is the manner in which I brought up my children. In this respect have I sinned greatly. My family never heard a single prayer in my house, nor any sort of religious instruction—nor received the slightest reproof, or check, to the full play of their natural propensities. They grew up like wild shrubs about me, without care or culture. At length, my example became terribly corrupting to them and now, when I feel that I could do something for them, my crime shuts me up, and that justly, in this prison, while my children are probably taking the down-hill road to ruin. What a fearful responsibility, kind friends, rests on every parent; but it is a responsibility which I have spurned and slighted."

"Have you seen your family since your imprisonment?"

"No, sir; nor should I now know my own children, should they come to see me."

"What was your first step to a state of reason, and reflection, and religion?"

"The loss of my accustomed dram; for no sooner were ardent spirits taken from me, than I began to see my desperate condition."

"How long since you have used liquor?"

"Never after the first three months of my confinement. I now hate it as my worst enemy."*

"Do you believe that your sins are all forgiven—that you are born again—that you are a child of God and an heir of heaven?"

* This is true; for a bottle has been left in his room, of which he never drank a drop, nor seemed to have any uneasiness from its presence.

"Ah. I should be the most miserable creature on earth, did I not believe all that; for what has such a man as I, in such a place as this, after committing such crimes as sent me here, to hope, in the way of enjoyment, in a world so sinned against, in every form, as I have sinned against this? O yes; I believe all these with all my heart."

"Would you like to get out of prison?"

"I have no desire on that subject. I am here justly perhaps I am most safe in such a place—more likely to make my way to heaven; and I am not certain what I could now do for my poor abused family."

The following morning, (April 27,) being in good health, I visited the hospital, where, among other interesting cases, I found a young man who had been reared in one of the eastern states, where education, and morality, and industry, are so characteristic of the people. I felt a great curiosity, as soon as I learned this fact, to trace his progress downward, from the New England family circle to his present situation. He gave me the following account of himself: "I was reared by pious parents: one of my brothers is a minister of the Gospel, holding a high position in society, while I am in this gloomy prison. In early youth it was generally thought, I believe, that I had the advantage of him in general talents; and I was also equal to him, perhaps, in moral habits. He, however, set in his heart the notion of living, not for himself, but for the world, as he called it. This I considered a freak of foolishness, and told him that the world might live for itself, and so would I; that the world would never thank him for living for it, if it ever took any notice of him whatever; and that the true idea of life was for every man to take care of himself, for then all would be taken care of, except those who might be born in sorrow and affliction, whom I proposed to help. So, in our early days, there was a difference of spirit

between us. He set out to live for others, I for myself; and the result you see before you. He took his patrimony in education, devoting all his early days to study. I took mine in money, and left my native land for the far west, intending to be a man of business. As the country was new, and the market-towns were sparse, I concluded I could do best in selling goods from house to house, and immediately commenced peddling. My employment was lucrative. I made money rapidly. My mind became intoxicated with the love of gain. My first deviation from strict propriety was Sabbath-breaking. After I had canvassed a town or neighborhood, if Sunday dawned on me immediately after, I was tempted to ride to the next town that day, so as to be ready for business early the next morning. This practice soon led to another. As I would be passing on Sabbath through the country, some one would be almost sure to hail me, as my goods were in much demand. At first I refused to sell on Sunday; but, thinking the matter over, I concluded there was no more sin in stopping my wagon for a few minutes, here and there, than there was in passing forward; perhaps there was not as much: and so, in a short time, I formed the habit of stopping whenever hailed by the inhabitants. But I did my work, on these days, with more than ordinary quiet. Soon, however, I thought there would be no more sin in my hailing them than in allowing them to hail me; and I, consequently, next commenced calling for customers in the ordinary way. This was done, for a time, with not the usual noise and bustle; I observed particular decorum in parts thickly settled; but in those very sparsely inhabited I soon began to act and feel just as on other days. It was not long, of course, before my conduct in the sparsely-settled districts, which are the most common in our western country, so far gained on me as to cover the whole Sabbath, wherever I might be. I rode, and hailed customers, and sold my fabrics, without a scruple. The sacredness of the

day, the day itself, was blotted from my conscience. This, sir, was my first great transgression.

"The next came as a natural consequence of the first. I was now in the habit of breaking one of God's commandments without fear or feeling; why keep the other nine? Would that make my case any better? If I had rebelled thus boldly and systematically against the authority of God, could I be any thing more than a settled rebel? Not that I jumped immediately to this conclusion; but, with many twinges of conscience, I gradually slid over, from one sin to another, till I was lost to all moral principle.

"There I was, then, a depraved man, corrupt in every part of me, ready for almost any work on the occurrence of a sufficient temptation. The temptation came; the crime was committed; and here I am. O, my friend, send out a warning voice to all the world, especially to the young, never to take the course I took. My first sin, you see, was resolving to lead a selfish life. My brother resolved to live a life of benevolence. Behold the difference! He is now a talented, respected, influential minister of God, saving hundreds annually from their sins, and laying up for himself treasures in heaven. Here am I, a poor, diseased, miserable convict, in a state's prison, with not one pleasant reflection to enliven the past—with no earthly hope to shed a sweet ray on the thick blackness of the future!"

He had been a Universalist before his arrest, and even after it; but sickness, and the prospect of death, brought him to his senses. He began to pray. God harrowed up his conscience. Light at length began to break in upon him. He continued to pray for pardon for nearly eight months. His supplications and penitence were at length regarded. He was enabled to believe. He now rejoices in God his Savior. Though he has no *earthly* hope, as he said, yet his confidence of reaching heaven is now strong. He thanks God for having arrested him, even by sending

him to prison, in his mad career; for he thinks that he should otherwise have almost certainly gone down to eternal ruin. The reader will perceive, by this and other cases, that punishment, in a well-conducted prison, is restorative as well as penal.

Tuesday, April 28. Two poor fellows were admitted last evening, the one for forgery and the other for burglary. I went out this morning to see them, and found them sitting together, solitary and alone. This season of silence and solitude given to a prisoner on his first entrance, is good for him. I approached them and accosted them very kindly. One of them knew me, and said he had heard me preach. He has a wife and four small children. At the first word, his heart melted within him. "I cannot live here," he exclaimed, with tears running down his cheeks. "I am in poor health, having lain five months in jail, in close confinement, where my constitution has been broken. I must die here soon. But to die in prison—my sweet wife, as charming a woman as ever smiled on a husband, and my four little cherubs, not yet old enough to know the wretchedness of their condition, far from me! O, sir, I cannot—I cannot! Is there no mercy for me?"

"Yes," said I, "there is mercy in abundance for you; but the mercy you think of, probably, is not the kind you most need."

"O, true," said the man, catching my meaning, "I know I need God's mercy—God's pardoning mercy—more than any thing else; but my wife, my children—these are now the chief care to me. I could give myself up to any torment, now or hereafter, seemingly—I could, at least, forget myself altogether, could I only, now that I see myself, be allowed to live and labor for their good solely. O, my sweet little family!"

"But your sentence is only for four years; and, in the meantime, you can do nothing better than to give yourself

up to the work of correcting your habits, disciplining your heart, and preparing yourself to be a greater blessing to your family, when you return to them. In a word, the thing you most want, at this time, is the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ, which will lay the foundation of all needed reformation, and make you, truly, a benefactor to your abused wife and children. I will leave you now," said I to him, "that you may reflect in silence upon your condition; but, whenever you wish to see me, speak to your guard, and he will send me word. I will come at your call, whenever you wish to take counsel with me, in respect either to your temporal or to your eternal welfare."

In the afternoon I again visited the hospital, hearing that there was an aged man sick, whom I had told before that his end was near. I found him very feeble. His appearance affected me profoundly. There he was, a very old man, with his white locks, his sunken cheeks, his dim eye, his trembling hand, his tottering feet, standing on the borders of the grave. No one can realize, till the sight is witnessed, how melancholy it is to see a venerable-looking man, whose white hairs should command respect, confined as a criminal in such a place. He, who, with his long staff, or seated in his easy chair, should be at home, viewing his farm and flocks, or reading his book in the cool of the day, with his children and grandchildren all about him, looking forward with hope to the period when they should bear him in mourning mixed with triumph to his honorable resting-place among the dead—to be here, reader, in this gloomy prison, sick and dying, without a relative to stand by his bed, without a child to close his eyes—expecting, in a few weeks, to be carried to a grave of ignominy, there not to rest a night, but to be rooted up from his place of burial by grave-yard robbers, and cut to pieces on the dissecting table. O, what a mournful sight, and how full of horror the very thought! But, if his mind is unprepared

for all this, more mournful still. Let us look into his case a little. I will call him L.

"Do you know the Savior as your redeemer, my aged friend?"

"No, sir, not as I know of," with a quivering voice.

"Do you know that you must shortly die?"

"Yes, I know that very well."

"Do you believe in the atonement made by Jesus Christ, for the salvation of those who believe?"

"I know but little about what you say."

"What is your dependence for salvation, if you know little or nothing of the atonement?"

"Prayer."

"To whom do you pray?"

"To God."

"For what do you pray?"

"For what the book says."

"What book?"

"The prayer-book, to be sure. Is it not that by which we pray?"

"It is not the book out of which we ought to pray."

"What book, then?"

"The heart. You should from the heart ask God to forgive your sins, to regenerate your soul, to adopt you as his child, to give you the witness of your acceptance, and, finally, to receive you into Abraham's bosom. You should pray from the heart, my old friend; for book-praying, especially if you do not understand what the prayers mean, as you seem not to know, will do you no good."

In this way I continued to open up to the old man's mind the way of salvation. I was impressed, never more so, with the folly, with the mischief, of teaching men to pray from books. If the publican did not need one, neither does any man.

As I left the old man another reflection came to my mind.

There he was, trying to be religious, having spent a long life in sin; and all the light he seemed to have was the little he obtained, in very early life, perhaps in childhood, from seeing the worship of the congregation while at church. He had made no progress. While all the world had been going forward, he had been standing still.

Another thought occurred to me with great force; and that was the difficulty of a man's seeking and obtaining a change of heart at such an age. It is a solemn, an impressive fact, that few aged persons ever obtain religion. I am now, as I have said before, an old man myself. I have witnessed a great many revivals among all classes of men, among the whites, and blacks, and the red sons of the forest—in civilized, half civilized, and savage life; and yet, all that I ever saw converted after they had passed their fiftieth year, would make but a very small number, perhaps not more than a score or two out of many thousands. What a warning to the procrastinator! How emphatically just and appropriate the language of the Bible, "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth!" O that my youthful reader may heed this precept!

I addressed another man, who seemed to be more needy than the rest. He conversed with me very freely. "My heart is a garden full of weeds and rank vegetation. I have cultivated the weeds only, while I have left the pure seed to be choked and exterminated." I directed him to the Savior. He told me that his besetting sin through life had been a continual carping at Christians, until one degree of offense after another had landed him in that dreadful place.

April 29. To-day I visited the female department, where I found two women sick. Having talked with them before, I concluded to try another method with them this time. I read to them the fifth chapter of Matthew; then made a prayer; and concluded by explaining, in a familiar way,

John v 6, throwing in several anecdotes to get their attention more completely to the main subject. But I had no great success. They were as obdurate as rocks. I have always observed that the female, who seems to have been made for tenderness, and piety, and moral courage, when really depraved and fallen, is not only the wickedest, but the most hard and unmanageable of beings.

Going next to the cook-room, I there found a man, who had been trained to believe in fatalism as taught by some modern religionists.

"Do you pray, sir?" said I.

"No, sir," he replied.

"Why not?"

"Because the prayers of the wicked are an abomination to the Lord."

Here the old story was again. How many thousands that cursed doctrine of unconditional election has sent to hell, no man can number. Is it not astonishing that any man in his senses should have ever taught it? And now, when the world is learning better things, those very Churches from which this doctrine used to come as regularly as the succession of the Sabbaths, are beginning to deny that they ever did teach it! But they should remember, that there are some old men still living, who can recollect what the fathers of this generation were in the habit of inculcating from the pulpit. Such seeds were sown, with an unsparing hand, all over this continent, by the Calvinistic Churches. There are some yet alive, who were persecuted for preaching another doctrine; who were laughed at as upstarts, because they could not comprehend the "great mystery of election;" and who fought their way to success, and even triumph, over the ashes of this mischievous system. You will see the relics of it now, in these more enlightened days, only occasionally, and that generally in the mind of some fallen being, like the convict

here alluded to, who wishes to excuse his neglect of practical religion.

Soon afterward I met another man, whose early instruction had been of a character similar to that of the one last named. His name is C.

"Are you trying to serve God?" said I to him.

"Yes," he answered; "I once enjoyed religion; but I do not now. My Church taught me, when a boy, 'once in grace, always in grace,' but I have lost all I ever had."

"Then you have fallen from grace? What, then, do you think of the old doctrine?"

"Think! I do not think—I *know* it is *false*."

I encouraged him to seek again of Him, who commanded his disciples to forgive their brethren till seventy times seven. He said he would; and I left him.

April 30. This day our new warden, Colonel Dewey reached the city. On seeing him, I found that I had been acquainted with his mother more than twenty-six years ago. I used to preach in his house, when Ohio was nearly a forest. The Colonel was then a boy. His father died when he was only ten years old. From that time he was educated by his mother; and, after leaving her watchful care, he has made on alone. He has now acquired the reputation of an intelligent, honest, pious, faithful man, while his business character is of the highest grade. He says he owes every thing to his mother; but as that has become a common saying, and very justly, no doubt, in thousands of instances, I will add, that the mother of our warden was a remarkable woman. Her son is worthy of her name.

May 1. This, reader, is the anniversary of my ministerial life. Thirty-seven years ago, this day, I left my wife, my child, my home and friends, to be a traveling preacher. You will pardon an old man for setting down a few data connecting with this long period of time. I

have received thirty-seven appointments, and have been able, by the mercy of God, to fill every one of them. I have had twenty-three appointments to a district as presiding elder in my connection. I have also, by the favor of my brethren, been returned a delegate to six General conferences of the Church; and now I am here, a preacher of reconciliation to the spirits in prison, within the walls of the Ohio penitentiary. Mercy and goodness have followed me all my days; and my eyes have seen God's salvation.

CHAPTER VI.

A beautiful morning—The Sabbath—An interesting service—Visit to my family—Call of an afflicted father and mother—Mournful reminiscences—Return to my labor—A new proposition—Heaven on earth—An expert old sailor—Attempt at escape—The hospital—A class meeting with the sick prisoners—The orators of this world—Triumph of the Christian orator.

This week opens with one of the loveliest days that ever dawned on our green world. The sun's rays are clear, and warm, and mild. There is a soft breeze fanning the earth and woods. The waters look bright and beautiful. The birds are singing their sweetest songs on every tree. There is a quiet in the streets of the city—a quiet over all the adjacent country, that seems to hold sway among the very cattle of the field; for I see no frisking among the herds, nor gamboling among the flocks; but the ox is silently grazing on the open plain, and the sheep are lying beneath the green tree's shade. Such a sight the inhabitant of Europe seldom sees. I could sit here, at my open window, and look out upon the lovely aspects of varied nature all day long. But no—it is Sabbath morning. Within the walls of this mighty prison there are hundreds of the wretched and the vile. They need the help of a helping hand. I must leave this pleasant landscape to others, while I go and give them aid.

This day, (May 3,) the congregation was overflowing. God was in his word. Many hearts were made sad on account of sin; but, if they are given to God, they will be made to rejoice through righteousness. It was a season of general weeping.

Monday, May 4. Early this morning I left my post to make a short visit to my family. Arriving on Tuesday, I found all well; and on the day following I was visited by the parents of two boys in prison. Reader, did you ever

see a parent under such circumstances? If not, it will be impossible to picture to you the grief these persons felt and manifested. See before you, if you can fancy well, the father, a well-dressed, genteel, good-looking man—a man holding a worthy place in society—once cheerful, prosperous, and happy—now broken in spirits, his eyes swollen with a year s weeping, his face pale and emaciated from his suffering, rapidly going to a grave of sorrow, and all because his darling son has thrown an indelible disgrace upon his family. Look upon that loving mother, with her broken heart, her blanched cheek, her quivering lip, sinking rapidly to the earth, praying it to cover her quickly from the gaze of men, because he whom she bore has become so vile a wretch. These are the parents of one of the lads now in prison. They were once young. They formed their friendship under circumstances of cheering promise. They looked forward to long years of domestic happiness. They were joined in marriage while yet radiant with hope. This boy was born to them. He was the first pledge of their affection—the darling of the household—the idol of their hearts. As he grew up, how they doted on his expanding faculties! How they caught at the first word he tried to lisp! How eagerly they seconded the efforts made by nature to open up the faculties of his little mind! How they watched and nursed him in sickness! How they smiled upon and enjoyed him in the hour of health! His first letter learned, his first book taken in hand, his first day at the village school, his first premium for good behavior, his first, and the following and final triumphs under the teacher's guardian eye—how all these swelled their joyous hearts! As he grew up toward manhood, what pictures of the respectability, of the talents, of the virtues, of the successes of their noble boy, rose up from time to time in their prospective view! But alas! alas! The tempter came. The lad's heart was corrupted.

The bait was offered and accepted. A thick cloud, never to be dissolved by this world's sun, settled down upon that happy dwelling. The child was hurried away by the law officers to a gloomy prison; and the heart-broken father and mother come here to inquire whether their son is well. O sin, what ravages thou hast wrought! Why shall not every man who knows the curses it always brings, join his heart, and soul, and influence, to that glorious Gospel, whose design is to expel it from the world?

Friday. This day I returned to my work improved in health; but I found many of the officers and convicts sick.

On Saturday I resumed my pastoral labors, enjoying an interesting season with some eight or ten persons for whom I sent messages to meet me at what is called the watering-place, which is in the centre of the inner yard. I told them that I was not a spy sent there to keep the guards informed of their behavior. If any of them broke the rules of the prison, it was every one's duty to let the warden and keepers know it; but my only business was to teach them religion, as an embassador of Christ. "Now," said I, "let us all agree to try one grand experiment which I have to propose to you. Let us see whether it be a fact, that, by any means, we can make this prison happier than a palace to us. It is thought that the thing is possible; and if so, what a fine thing it would be for us! Only think of it," said I, as I warmed upon the subject, "to make ourselves just as happy in this gloomy prison as the wealthiest and freest man on earth, in magnificent apartments, surrounded by taste and fashion! If such a thing is practicable, wouldn't you all like much to know it?"

"Certainly," said my attentive auditory; and they seemed to mean all they said.

"Well, then," I continued, "the experiment is a very simple and easy one. It consists in giving our hearts to God; in consecrating all we have—body, soul, spirit—to

his service; in seeking and obtaining the pardon of all our sins; in being renewed in heart and life by the spirit of the eternal God; and in feeling within us a witness, clear and conclusive, that the past is forgiven, that the present is accepted, that the future is in the keeping of a merciful and loving Father, whose pleasure is to bring us to inherit everlasting life at his right hand. That is all," said I, urgently. "Get this, and the little space within these walls will be a place of broad rivers and streams. God will then dwell within them; and where God is, there is heaven; and where heaven is, there must be joy. What think ye of the experiment?"

They all seemed to catch the right idea, and promised to begin, from that moment, as I had counseled them.

After dismissing this little meeting, I called for a fellow, an old sailor, whose case had recently become very interesting. He was a great climber. I once heard of a man who said he could climb a sunbeam. This seaman could come as near to such a feat as any one I ever met with; and the history of a recent exploit here would go far to show it. Perhaps the reader never saw, and may never see, the chimney of our prison dry-house. If he should ever get a sight of it, he will at once perceive that it was no ordinary feat for a man to climb to the top of it, on the inside, and there remain, out of sight, bearing himself against its walls, from Saturday noon until Monday night. But such a feat this old sailor performed only a short time ago. He hoped to be able, by that means, to get over the wall; but he was discovered by the guard, and recaptured. Poor fellow! what will not a man do for liberty?

When this convict came to me, I talked with him freely on the subject of religion. He seemed much broken in spirits. He promised to try to be contented with his lot, to observe the rules of the prison, and to set out to make his way to heaven. I am not confident whether

he will fulfill his engagements, but it is right to try him.

Going next to the hospital, I changed the order of business a little. Instead of taking the helpless inmates singly and severally, I constituted them into a sort of class meeting, asking them questions, receiving their answers, and giving them advice and consolation according to their circumstances. Perhaps it was the first meeting of the kind ever held within the walls of a state prison. It was an interesting, a melancholy, and yet, in one aspect, a glorious season. It threw a greater than ordinary solemnity over their minds. The conversations were altogether more impressive than usual. It was a scene of interest, certainly, to stand there, in the midst of that group of sick and dying—some lying on beds, some sitting up, supported by pillows, others seated in chairs—and behold the tears start in their eyes, the color come to their blanched cheeks, and the light of hope play upon their pallid lips, as I spoke of the way of salvation, of the victories of redemption, and of the glorious realities of heaven. I have often thought that the great orators of antiquity, who, like Demosthenes and Cicero, by their powers of speech, could change the minds and resolutions of a mixed multitude—could move a senate or an assembly of the people, as a field of grain is moved by the passing wind—could rouse or settle a whole empire in a single harangue—must have experienced a high joy on such occasions; and so, undoubtedly, they did. But, reader, I think I can say, without presumption, that neither Demosthenes, nor Cicero, nor Burke, nor Chatham, nor Patrick Henry, ever felt a loftier, wider, sublimer joy, in their proudest triumphs, than I have felt while God has given me the victory over the hearts and habits of such perverse beings as inhabit our state prison. Demosthenes gained his victories over the Athenians and other Greeks by falling in with their prejudices and passions: the minister

of God, on the contrary, carries his point against these prejudices and passions. Cicero swayed the Roman senate by raising their indignation against their enemies: the herald of Christ rouses his audience to a most bitter self-condemnation. Burke, and the other orators of modern times, swept every thing before them by presenting to their hearers manifest objects of visible, and tangible, and immediate advantage: the embassador of the Gospel, on the other hand, offers but little or no physical profit, as God has not seen fit to make any great and universal distinction between the good and the bad in worldly happiness. The present, in fact, which the preacher offers, is often made up of pain and misery: all his proffered rewards and pleasures are in the future. They are not only invisible, but immaterial, mental, spiritual; just such as bad men least relish. And yet, reader, against all these disadvantages, he sometimes carries the day, causing a congregation of wretched sinners to tremble with emotion, to weep with penitence, to burst forth in self-reproaches, to extend forgiveness to every body but themselves, or to exult in the victories of a faith which reduces them to insignificance in order to do full honor to the glory of One whom, till the decisive moment, they had hated and scorned above all other beings. Such, reader, are the triumphs of God's ministers; which, when they come, are always attributed to a power above them, and yet with a joy, with a rapture, far above any thing ever experienced by Demosthenes or Cicero. Something of this rapture I felt this day, when talking to these poor sinners in the hospital, while their silence, their attention, their tears, their cries of agony, their shouts of victory, gave assurance that the word of God was having its effect among them.

CHAPTER VII.

"Why will ye die?"—A good time—Inveterate obduracy of the female convicts—An incident—The suffering of the innocent—An aged bigamist—A digression—Settlement of the Scioto valley—Early times—Death of a prisoner—Talk with a son of pious parents—Strange revelations—Bad company—Sabbath desecration—Bar-keeping—Sound sense from a convict—Another case—A third man—Shouting—Glorious scene—A man ready to die—Salvation found—Confessions of an old criminal—Close of the week.

At eleven o'clock of this day (May 17) I preached to the male prisoners and about two hundred citizens, who had come in to worship with us. My text was Ezek. xxxiii, 22: "Why will ye die?"

The reader will at once perceive, that the sermons addressed to such beings must differ much from those preached to the public generally. Prisoners are, in general, far below the average of their race in mental character, as well as in moral condition. They must be treated accordingly. Simple subjects, presented in the plainest and most pointed manner, must be given them.

The topic chosen for this occasion, for example, was divided thus:

I. The death spoken of in the text.

II. Reasons why men *should not* die that death.

III. The cause why men *do* die that death.

1. Not because they were made to die;

2. Not because they have sinned and now must die;

3. But because they do not "come to Christ that they might have life."

The poor fellows seemed to be much moved under the presentation of this subject. Many tears were shed. Indeed, I am not certain whether there was one who did not weep, more or less. But tears are not always to be taken in proof of genuine and persevering penitence. They indicate present feeling; and this, often repeated, generally

leads to that tenderness of heart which results in true repentance and a holy life.

In the afternoon I preached to the women, where every thing looks more doleful than in the male department. A woman when lost is lost entirely. I have found those here much worse, in every respect, than the men; less open to conviction, less feeling, more hardened in their iniquity. Here is a wonder, a miracle, for the philosopher to unravel.

After my second discourse was completed, and before I had left the room, a lad was let in from the other side to see his mother. It was their first meeting since their imprisonment. They have been mentioned in a former chapter. No sooner did the boy show his face, than the mother sprang to her feet, ran to him, caught him about the neck, kissed him a thousand times, all the while showering him with her tears and shouting her thanks for the unexpected privilege. I am inclined to think that neither of them should ever have seen the inside of this gloomy prison. They both seem to deserve a better fate. How afflicting for innocent men and women to be torn from their homes, as I believe they often are, by the malice of their neighbors, who bear false witness against them! I have not the shadow of a doubt that there are some, perhaps I may say many, in this penitentiary, who have been sent here by false testimony and the carelessness of juries. But such is life everywhere. The innocent often suffer for the crimes of the guilty. What a strong proof, that a day is needed, as we know one has been appointed, in which all these cases of injustice shall be re-examined and requited!

On my return to my own apartment I visited the cell of a very aged man, not the one mentioned before, who has passed his threescore years and ten. His head is as white as wool. In any other place, he would look venerable indeed; but here, in this gloomy place, with the taint of his iniquity on him, he seems to be the most miserable among

the living. He is confined for bigamy. At an age when he ought to have been looking out a place where he might make his grave, he abandoned his first wife, and hunted him up a second, if I remember correctly, in a short time. He has a large and respectable connection in the world. Some of his brothers stand high in public esteem. But he, wretched man! has not only sinned deeply, but is little or not at all penitent for his sin. Such a case of hardened villany I have seldom seen. For a man to go thus boldly into vice, when the fire of youth is gone, when we expect to see the coolness and the philosophy of age taking the control, is most remarkable; but to see him, after he has had full time for reflection, and has suffered the severe penalty of his crime, still impliedly justifying himself by making no concessions, would seem incredible to every person unacquainted with such a fact. And yet there are some who tell that man is not depraved; that he is naturally quite good at heart; that his transgressions are generally traceable to some sudden temptation; that his conduct is nearly always that which he considers for the best!

The reader may be pleased, this day, (Monday, May 18,) to make a short digression with me from the regular line of the narrative. I had been invited to attend a semi-centennial celebration of the settlement of the Scioto valley, at Chillicothe. It was to be a great time; and I was anxious to be present. The meeting had been called by the oldest living inhabitants of the valley.

The day was not chosen with chronological exactness; for the first ploughing of the valley took place, not on the 18th, but on the 10th of May, 1796, on what was then called "Station prairie," below the village. There was then no white settlement nearer than Massee station, at the three islands, since called Manchester. The next nearest settlement was Wheeling, in Virginia, unless there might be a few squatters, here and there, on the banks of the Ohio.

The meeting was a grand one, and full of interest to us old people. There were some men, who, fifty years before, had pitched their tents in this valley, then a howling wilderness. They were the very men who first broke the soil of the now vast, rich, populous state of Ohio. They were there in person. Many of them, to show us how they used to do it, hobbled along with their long walking-sticks; but they made a bad foot of it. There were men in that large gathering who had known Ohio from the beginning—who could recount her entire history from personal recollection—who could trace every step she had taken from infancy to greatness. When all were seated, several spirited addresses were made, after which the concourse adjourned to Colonel Medary's, where a grand dinner was served up to the old settlers and the friends who had come together to aid in the festivities. You may depend on it, reader, there were some great talkings on that occasion. There old men could not help telling how they used to fare in other times, when the coon, and the squirrel, and the bear, and the woody-headed deer, and other wild meat, constituted their chief livelihood. There were some stories told, I imagine, about hunting, and fishing, and sowing, and reaping, in places where the tracks of the red men were as much looked after as if they had been those of tigers or hyenas. The way the old people described their first log cabins, their earliest attempts at agriculture, the distances they went to get a little corn or wheat ground, their school-houses and school-learning, their privations and sufferings in religious as well as worldly matters, and the fortitude and hope by which they bore up against a thousand almost forgotten discouragements, would now sound like romance to the neophytes of the present generation.

When the world was all talked over, from Adam to Malachi, and from Malachi to Daniel Boone and his Indian hunters, the blessings of Divine Providence were religiously

invoked to remain upon the fathers, and we parted, never to meet again in this state of being.

Reaching home on Friday, I proceeded directly to the hospital, where I learned a man was just then dying. He died soon after. He had been long afflicted in his head; but no one could imagine what ailed him. Some had entertained doubts about his having been as bad as he had pretended to be; but all doubts were dissolved by a *post mortem* examination. On opening his skull, it appeared that one lobe of his brain was entirely ossified; and I state the case to show, that the officers of a prison should not be too prone to lay blame too readily on persons professing to be sick, whose disease does not show itself by the ordinary symptoms. It is a wonder how this man could have lived so long, though phrenologists may say, that there being one side of his head entirely sound, all the *faculties* of his mind were entire, though not unimpaired.

As I was retiring from the room, a man, whom I shall call S., followed me to the door. Taking me aside, he told me who he was, and related to me the substance of his former life, in nearly the following words: "You are well acquainted with my father and mother, and with all my father's family. You will be surprised to hear me tell who they are. [He seemed much moved by the revelation, and, I confess, I was perfectly confounded.] You see, then, I was well educated, for the times and for the place where I lived. My parents were religious, my mother being deeply pious, as you well know. I was very religiously brought up, every thing having been done for my morals that could be done by the most attentive parents. Until I was quite a youth I never dreamed of doing any thing improper, having a high sense of right and propriety firmly established in me. My first misstep was keeping bad company, when I knew what I was doing, through the idea that I was beyond being corrupted by it. The next step was the desecration

of the holy Sabbath, to which I was led by my companions, when my parents were at church. These two sins carried me into every other which I have since committed; and I have committed nearly every sin known to the decalogue. I soon fell into the lowest pit of wickedness. Abandoning home, I became a bar-keeper in a little, filthy 'doggery,' where my infamy was completed. Finding it necessary, for certain reasons, to fly the country, I attempted to raise money on a forged note, was detected, prosecuted, and sent to this place for five years. My parents, on hearing of my ruin and imprisonment, made every effort in their power to get me released, not knowing how unworthy their son was of the slightest exertion. They failed; and it is well for me, for them, for the community, that they did; for I should have gone out with a heart full of corruption—with a soul bent on revenge and mischief—with a determination to do every thing in my power to avenge myself for the inflicted punishment. But here I have been, you know how long. My sufferings of mind and body soon broke my wicked spirit. I began to reflect seriously on my past conduct. Conviction settled in my heart. I opened my mouth once more in prayer. I used the little prayers my mother taught me in my infancy. But these, though suited to a little, innocent child, were not deep enough for a hardened, abandoned, wretched sinner. Like the publican, I was compelled, at last, to cry aloud, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner.' Mercy came. The cloud was lifted from my mind. Light broke in upon my benighted nature. The waves of sorrow and of sin ceased at the same time. Peace reigned on my spirit. I looked up and praised God, and have ever since been patient, grateful, and truly happy. I ask nothing now but for God to spare my life till my time of imprisonment expires, that I may go out and show my father and mother how sorrowful I am for my past wickedness, and how much I can do to remove the burden I have

imposed upon them. Yes, may God let me live to be the life and stay of my poor, weeping, heart-broken parents! But the lesson I wish you to draw from my example, and which I hope you will freely spread upon the wings of the wind, is, that that man, young or old, is unsafe, who trusts that he is beyond corruption—that he is too pure and strong for bad company to ruin him."

Upon this man leaving me, I was followed by another, whom I used to know well, in his better days. I knew his father, and mother, and other relations. They were all good, substantial, pious people; but they have long since gone to the better land. The course of this man's wickedness began, also, in disobedience to his parents, which led to Sabbath-breaking, drinking, horse-stealing, and finally to the penitentiary. This is his second term at the state prison. The first time he was pardoned out too soon. His friends did him a real injury. He was committed for ten years, seven of which have passed away. Poor fellow! he is emaciated, sickly, broken down in spirits—the very shadow of the hale, sprightly, good-looking man I once knew him. He is earnestly seeking the salvation of his soul; and I doubt whether he will live to see the expiration of his sentence.

To-day, while sitting in the bell-house, a prisoner, who was passing with a bucket of water, set down his bucket, and approached me, shouting, "Glory be to God, father Finley! I have found the Lord to be precious to my soul, since you began to preach to us Christ and him crucified. God has pardoned all my sins. Last night, while praying in my cell, God blessed me wonderfully. O, I am now *happy, happy, happy!* I now feel as I never felt before."

"What," said I, "happy in a state prison! You must be beside yourself."

"Well," said the fellow, "perhaps I am; but I hope I

shall never come to myself again, if this is being crazy. O, I am so happy!"

O yes, thank God! religion can make a palace of a prison. The man's whole manner was so genuine, so hearty, so evidently sincere, that I was confident he had found out the mystery of salvation. The tears started from my eyes, to see a poor, pale, hard-working prisoner feel so happy. He was the first-fruit of my ministry in the prison—my first convert—my Timothy; and I confess, prisoner as he was, criminal as he had been, I now loved him. I exhorted him much to hold on faithfully—to do every known duty—to omit nothing—to trust in God—to live, from that time, for holiness and heaven.

Saturday, May 23. Going out into the yard, I sat down by the well to converse with the prisoners, as they came to draw water. Recalling the language of the Savior, I cried, with a loud and cheerful voice, "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life freely." The tears started in their eyes. They flocked about me, as if there were a charm in the offers of salvation. The employers no doubt think, at least in some prisons, that the time of the poor prisoners could be more *profitably* spent in their workshops. Very likely, so far as *their* pockets are concerned; but I have no care about employers' pockets. They get enough out of these men, at any rate; and my business is to instruct them, in season and out of season, in the way to heaven, if there is not a dollar made out of their hard labor. It is a matter of no consequence to community, whether much or little money, or none at all, is made out of their labor; but it is a thing of the highest moment to see that their morals are improved by sound religion—the only thing that will improve morals—before they mingle with the world again. So, here I kept them, talking with them about their souls, until I had gathered quite a congregation, to whom I preached Jesus and the resurrection.

I went next to the hospital, to see a man, whom I shall call W. He was very low. He covered himself with reproaches. With weeping eyes, he told me what a great sinner he had been, but thanked God that he had lived to hear the Gospel in a prison. Nowhere else, he said, would he have ever taken heed to it. He had once been, it is true, a professing Christian; but the life and power of religion had long since left him. Within a few weeks he began to seek God again; "and now," said the poor man, raising his hands above him—"now, thank God! I am a new creature. Glory be to God, my sins are all forgiven! My heart is full of comfort, and my hopes of heaven are triumphant!"

Next I visited B. He, too, is a very sick man. He has been here but about a month. When he came, he was a hearty, stout, thick-set man, as rugged as an oak. Now, his body is giving way to the wasting emotions of his mind. His life has been a very bad one; but he says he has given himself to God, to serve him till he dies. He, like W., was once a professor of religion; and he now hopes that God has pardoned and healed his backslidings. He is, certainly, a different man from what he was two weeks ago. After examining him thoroughly, I came to the conclusion, that his conversion, or reclamation, was genuine. His companions tell me, that he prayed nearly all the time, and that with great agony of spirit, for ten or fifteen days, until his mind apparently became tranquil, and he shouted aloud for joy. No sooner did I throw out a hint about his past life, than he exclaimed, "O yes, it has been one tissue of rebellion and sin against God. O, what pain my reflections give me! but, blessed be the name of the eternal God! my sins are pardoned. I do not guess so or hope so. I know it. I have the evidence in my heart. God now comforts me, or I should die. I thank you, father Finley, for preaching the Gospel to me. You have been the

instrument of my salvation. I hope I shall see you in a better world."

In the state shop I found J., an ignorant man, who is here for life. He had heard me preach, many years before. He never had any religious training; and at sixty he did not know a letter of his mother tongue. But, since he became a prisoner, he has learned to read, so that he now peruses his Bible with no little ease. He told me that he had often had deep and powerful convictions of sin in his younger days; but he had experienced nothing of the kind for a great number of years. He said he was without feeling, and desired me to warn all young people against stifling the operations of the Spirit in their youth. I asked him if he did not try to seek the Lord, and to obtain the pardon of his sins. He said he would be glad to do so, but that the door was shut. He had been so wicked, he said, that God would not, could not, forgive him. I began to quote God's promises, and repeated a score or two of passages to him. I told him that God had pardoned thieves, murderers, persecutors, blasphemers, and the worst of men generally. I pointed him to the example of the dying Savior, who, on the cross, prayed for his murderers, some of whom were undoubtedly converted under the preaching of St. Peter. "And now," said I, "if God can pardon and save the murderers of his only-begotten Son, how much more will he pardon and save you, if you seek him as you ought!" This touched something within him, which, he said, had never been touched before. I proceeded to remove, by simple arguments, all his infidel objections; and he promised me he would commence seeking religion from that instant. He kept his word.

I came next to a man who had lived a very abandoned life, according to his own account, till his imprisonment; and even after his confinement, for several years, he had had no serious thoughts of religion. He came in before it

was customary to have a chaplain in the prison. He gave me a dismal account of the manner in which prisoners spent their time before they had any instruction in religion. The whole establishment, he said, was a vast school of vice The older and more wicked convicts made themselves the teachers of iniquity to the younger men and boys about them. Plans of escape, involving the murder of the guard, and a thousand things of that horrible nature, were all the time boiling in the hearts of the inmates. They had no fear of God before their eyes. He referred with great interest, however, to a single exception to his statement. He said that a certain gentleman, by the name of Cox, who spent a winter in Columbus as a representative in the Legislature, used to devote his Sabbaths to the prisoners. "Never," added the man, "had I felt as his words made me feel. He was not only an enlightened, but a very good man. It was through his instrumentality that my blind eyes were opened. I turned, with my whole heart, to God by his direction, and am now, I trust, in the way to heaven." He wished me to thank his benefactor in his behalf, should I ever see him. I take this mode of complying with the man's wishes; and I would now say to every one, "Sow thy seed in the morning, and in the evening withhold not thy hand." Here is a sinner saved by a faithful servant of God, who, though employed in secular business, could not let his Sabbaths pass without laboring for the good of some one. May the world be speedily filled with such legislators!

I close this week with feelings of profound gratitude to my heavenly Father. Three men, under the blessing of God, have been converted from the error of their way, and filled with the triumphs of redeeming grace, since the last Sabbath. They are genuine conversions. I have been too long engaged in saving sinners to be easily deceived by hollow and mercenary pretensions. God has, of a truth,

made bare his arm within the walls of this gloomy prison! O may the work spread, till every soul here, guards and prisoners, shall be happy in the Lord! What a glorious place would this penitentiary of Ohio then be!

CHAPTER VIII.

The worst kind of infidelity—Visit from Rev. Mr. Wheeler, missionary to the Indians beyond the Mississippi—Gross act of injustice of the American government—The great well in the prison yard—Sermon—A refreshing season—General Taylor's triumph over the Mexicans—A call at the blacksmith shop—A favorite son—Two points for reflection—Some statements for Church members—A phrenologist among the prisoners—Talk with a hypochondriac—Experience of a new convert The grind stone-turner—Publishing pardons—Shouting of a youth—Letter from a mother to her son—Letter from a son to his mother.

This morning (Sabbath, May 24) I feel a burning desire to be entirely conformed to the will of God, that I may see the salvation of the Lord swelling like a flood through all these premises. In reading my usual lessons my mind was turned to the subject of Universalism. I consider this the worst form of infidelity. It is so fine for a sinner to imagine, that, after a life of transgression, he is as sure of heaven as an apostle. This error has crept into the prison. Nearly all the prisoners, in fact, have been infected with it while in their career of vice. Nothing else, they say, could have held them up in crime, at the risk of life every step they took, but the conviction, which they tried hard to entertain, that, after a life of stealing, house-breaking, robbing, plundering, and murder, they would certainly go up to sit down with the patriarchs in heaven! O, what a soul-damning error! It has ruined millions of the human family!

At eight o'clock I went to the female department, and preached from Luke xviii, 42. The women were somewhat moved—rather more than I have yet seen them. A few of them wept bitterly.

A gentleman called upon me from the country, bringing word from my family. They are all well; and here let me say, that for forty-seven years God has spared me every

one of my household. We have never had a death among us. My wife, daughter, eleven grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, all that God has given me, are still living. We have passed through cholera, fevers, and various epidemics, in the country and in the city, but never one of us has been taken. May my offspring, even to the second and third generations, be yet a seed in the earth, to bring forth the pleasant fruits of righteousness!

I was also visited by Rev. Mr. Wheeler, missionary among the Wyandotts west of the Mississippi. With this tribe I once labored as a missionary; and they made me their chief. When my appointment from the Church was concluded I resigned the royal honor; but I always hear from my tribe with feelings of great interest. Brother Wheeler brings good news from them; but I wish to record a fact, which I would have go down to the latest generation, as an example of the injustice and dishonesty of the American government to these unfortunate and noble-hearted children of the forest. The government would not suffer these men to rest, day or night, till they had extorted, by threats and false promises, an engagement from them to remove to the west bank of the Mississippi. We were to pay them for their land its full value. The poor tribe consented, and gave their official signature to the agreement. The government sent the appraisers on, before the treaty was signed, to value the property of the red men. The estimate was fixed at one hundred and sixty thousand dollars. The Indians seemed satisfied, and gave up the possession of their land, and departed. Having got the Indians away, however, the government refused payment, and sent on another set of commissioners, who appraised the tract at only one half of the sum at first agreed upon; and that sum is all the Congress of the United States ever paid them. And now, reader, as you are an American, I wish you to lay it to heart, that a nation thus wanting in integrity

and honor to the weak will never prosper, if there is a God in heaven, till such abuse of power is repented of and forgiven. We may flourish for a day; but the hour of reckoning is coming, and fearful will that hour be. Let us repent in sackcloth and ashes, and it may be God will pardon us. I have no doubt that many of the calamities he has sent upon us are judgments for these and similar iniquities.

On Monday morning I went again to the great well in the prison yard. The prisoners, seeing me there, knew what I was about to do, and came flocking to me from every quarter, bringing their water-buckets with them. I spoke to them from the words recorded in John iv, 13, 14: "Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: but whosoever drinketh of the water I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water I shall give him shall be in him a well of living water springing up into eternal life." It was a scene worthy of a painter's pencil to see the poor fellows standing there in a ring about, with their buckets in their hands, listening to my discourse, while the tears were streaming down their pallid faces.

After preaching I turned the order of the meeting and began to ask them questions. G. said, "Yesterday was a good day to my poor soul under the preaching of the Gospel." M. said, he believed that he had recently tasted of the water I had spoken of, and longed for more of it. Others wished me to pray for them, that they might be able to drink the water of life now and hereafter. It was a most refreshing season.

Tuesday, 26th. This day was spent in visiting the sick. P. must shortly die; but he is all ready. In the evening news came that General Taylor had gained a decisive victory over the poor Mexicans. What a ringing of bells, firing of cannon, and blazing of bonfires, as if it was any great achievement for a herd of lions to scare and slaughter any

quantity of feeble and defenseless sheep, or as if it were any glory for men to bathe their hands in the blood of their weaker brethren! Why not, rather, go and put on mourning for the thousands of once happy mothers and children, whom this victory has changed into widows and orphans? Such is the infatuation of a wicked, and worldly, and perverse generation.

Wednesday was spent in the hospital with the sick and dying.

After worship with the sick I went to the blacksmith shops, and conversed with several persons privately and pointedly. Among the number I found there was the youngest son of a minister of the Gospel, whom I had known in other years. His father, more than thirty years before, had been my fellow-laborer in the vineyard of the Lord. This was his favorite child; and I greatly fear that, with all the piety, and judgment, and excellency of that man of God, the sin of parental indulgence had much to do in the work of ruining that son. But I forbear. It is a case of which I can speak much for the pain it gives me. When will parents learn that reproof, correction, even severity, is better than indulgence?

There are two facts in this case worthy of reflection: 1. This man was the youngest son; and I have noticed, for sixty years, that the youngest child of a large family is generally the sprightliest, the most intellectual, and yet the oftenest ruined by parental fondness. 2. He was the son of a clergyman—of a Methodist clergyman; and I am therefore induced to say a word respecting this class of men and of their families. It is an English adage, that "the priest's children are the worst in the parish;" and it cannot be denied, that there is frequently too much truth in the statement. But, reader, as a palliation to this reproach, I desire you to look at a few facts in this connection. Remember, in the first place, that the clergyman devotes his life, not to

his own family, but to the families about him. Remember that, to execute his mission, a Methodist minister, in particular, is compelled, as a general thing, to be absent from home from one-half to four-fifths of his whole time. Remember that, during this almost constant absence, the education of the children devolves entirely on the mother, who is often so plunged in poverty and domestic cares, that she is glad if she can get all her little ones safely and comfortably through each day, to say nothing of the higher kind of intellectual, and moral, and spiritual improvement. The children are therefore necessarily abandoned, more or less, to their own course of conduct. They thus run loose during childhood; and when they come to the years of reflection they meet certain trials of mind for which their life has not prepared them, and which I would gladly suppress, were silence the part of duty. But I feel bound to speak plainly. These poor children find, on reaching the age of thought, that they are the offspring of parents who have systematically abandoned their own interests to serve a religious people; that that people, with all their piety, and benevolence, and profusion, have not only suffered their benefactors to live in want, but have seen the helpless families of these benefactors grow up unprovided for and uninstructed; and that now, when they begin to look about them for a place among their fellow-beings, where they can live with respectability and usefulness, no one of those whom their parents forsook all to serve, holds out the helping hand any the sooner for this momentous consideration. This, reader, with honorable exceptions, is the general rule. These are the disheartening, if not the bitter reflections of the sons and daughters of many of our most amiable, and devoted, and successful ministers of the Gospel. Is it a wonder that they are stung to the heart; that they are prone to consider all religion as mere pretension; that they are tempted to regard a worldly life, however mercenary, not only as more reason-

able, but especially as more profitable, than that of their duped and over-generous parents? You may never have thought of the subject in this light before; but, depend upon it, there is an evil here, concealed from the public eye in general, to which much of the apostasy complained of must be attributed.

From the shops I proceeded to the female department, where I spent several hours in teaching the ignorant inmates to read and spell.

This afternoon a man obtained admission into the prison who professes to be a phrenologist, and says he can tell the crimes for which the prisoners were committed by examining their heads. Some of the poor fellows reluctantly submitted; and he made himself appear ridiculous. After he had laid himself open on all sides, I told him if he would just sit on the stool I would examine *his* head, and would tell him some things about himself that were not generally understood. He looked me in the eye a moment, turned red, and made his way somewhat in haste to the outside gate. That is all I will say of the fellow *now*.

After the disappearance of the phrenologist, I went to see a man who is partially insane. His mania runs on his health. He thinks he is very sick, and that he will shortly die, when, in truth, he is quite stout. I had before conversed with him about religion, but I could not make it seem desirable in his eyes. To-day, however, with a faint hope in some way of benefiting the fellow, I took a new turn with him.

"How are you to-day, my friend?" said I to him.

"O, very bad—very bad, indeed, sir," the man replied.

"You are quite sick, are you?"

"Very sick, sir; cannot stand it long."

"Would you not like to have me call a doctor for you?"

"O yes, indeed, sir, that is just what I have been wanting this long time."

"Well, but what kind of a doctor would you like to have?"

"Ah, sir, I am sure one of the oldest kind, sir, would do best for me, sir. These new ways o' doctoring, with little bird's-eye pills, and with water, and with steam, and all that, sir, I know nothing about, sir. Let me have a doctor of the old school, sir."

"Very well, my friend, I have a physician in my mind, with whose skill I am somewhat acquainted, who has cured all manner of diseases. Fevers, and plagues, and hemorrhages of various kinds, he has healed almost or quite instantly. He is said, in fact, to have removed deafness, and blindness, and unloosed the tongues of dumb people. The report goes that he has even raised men from death; and several facts of this nature are recorded of him, which are attested by numerous witnesses."

"You don't say so!"

"Yes, I do say so; and I say more, likewise. He is said to be as skillful in regulating men's minds, as in putting their bodies in perfect order. If you have any sort of distemper of soul, if some passion gets the preponderance, and you hardly know what to do with yourself, being so carried about by an impulse which your judgment condemns, he can just subdue it in a few moments, so that you become all quiet and self-manageable almost immediately."

"Is it possible!"

"Yes, it is possible, for I know it; and this is not all that is curious and wonderful about this remarkable physician. Whatever your disease is, or wherever located, he begins his treatment with the heart. He says the heart is every thing to one's health, as out of it are 'the issues of life;' and you know yourself, that, as every part of our system is grown and renovated out of the blood, so the blood comes entirely from the heart, making it, truly, the seat of health and sickness, of good and evil, to every one

of us. Some doctors, you know, regard all maladies as proceeding from the liver; others, as coming from the skin; others still, as resulting from a derangement of the nerves. But this physician looks upon every thing by which men suffer in this life any thing worth speaking of, as issuing from the heart; and, therefore, if the heart can be made right, all else will come right at last. What do you think of that?"

"Why, sir, it is just my opinion. I should like much to see him."

"Would you consult him if you knew where to find him, or if you could get him to visit you?"

"Why, certainly! Why not?"

"Would you do as he might tell you?"

"I would, most gladly. But are you certain he can do all that you have heard about him?"

"I am certain."

"How do you know?"

"By his having cured me of every thing."

"O, you do look well; and I should be glad to learn more about him, and to have him come and visit me. But what is his name, sir?"

"That you can find in this little book, which is a book of advertisements, and cures, and so forth. (I handed him a small Testament.) You will find every thing you need to know about this great Physician in this small volume; and when I see you again, I will hear from you what you think of it, and of his manner of doctoring sick people."

The man took the book. He was a poor Catholic, and would hardly know the Bible from any other production by its contents. I left him to ponder awhile over what I had told him.

When I visited him again his eye was beaming with animation.

"Well," said I, "my friend, how do you like the adver tisement of this great Physician?"

"He is great indeed, sir."

"You have found the call he makes upon all people. I think I have it here before me. Yes, here it is: 'Come unto me all ye that are weary and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.'"

I then sat down and explained this passage to the poor fellow. 1. Who it is that calls us. 2. What is meant by coming. 3. What the Physician promises to do for us The man listened with breathless attention—not so much, perhaps, because I was preaching Christ to him, but because I was talking of his favorite topic—health and sickness. We learn by this case, that not only the poor, the rich, the learned, the ignorant, and all similar classes of persons have a way of access to them, but that insanity itself has its handle by which to take hold of it. It often requires, however, greater skill than I am master of to lay hold of a disposition in the right manner.

I called next on J., whom I have mentioned before as being an ardent seeker of religion. I found him swimming in tears. But his tears were no longer those of sorrow. He was overflowing with love, and peace, and joy. God had pardoned his sins. "I am now," said the man, with great warmth of expression—"I am now happier than ever I was in all my life. This morning, after praying to my heaverly Father, in my cell, I took up the Hymn-Book, and fell upon a few verses that described my case exactly. I made a vigorous effort to let my soul melt, as it were, and flow along in the current of the hymn. In an instant I felt a change operating within. I looked up to God *through* Christ as I never had before. God, as he never had before, looked down on me. If I may say so, our eyes met. Mine were filled with penitence, prayer, and hope. His beamed with love, mercy, and forgiveness. O

what a moment! My heart leaped up within me. I had power given me to believe. I cast my whole case on God; and from that instant I have been the happiest man on earth." This was a clear conversion. I exhorted him to be faithful—to continue in prayer, in watching, and in faith, for the enemy of his soul was nigh.

I had been desired to converse with a man who had been committed for murder, who was one of the hardest cases in the prison, and whom the officers could not easily manage. They wished me to try my hand with him. I hunted him up. He was at a grindstone, where he was kept, much of the time, sharpening tools. I found him gloomy, sullen, savage. I approached him with all the kindness of our merciful religion: "Well, my friend," said I, "this is a pretty hard business."

"Yes."

"You have a great deal of time for thinking."

"Yes."

"Well, have you thought, among other things, how merciful your heavenly Father has been to you, in sparing your life till this time, in giving you opportunity for calm reflection, in furnishing you with the promptings and enlightening influence of his Holy Spirit, and in offering you redemption, pardon, peace, and heaven, through faith in the Redeemer?"

"Not till very lately."

"How lately?"

"Within a week or two past."

"Have your reflections brought you to any practical conclusions as to what you will do?"

"Only one."

"What was that?"

"Why, I came to the conclusion that I would be willing to serve God if I knew how; but I knew not how, and I was so ignorant I felt ashamed to speak to you about it."

"But if you were ignorant, you were the very person that has a right to such light, of any body who is supposed to have it."

"But I did not feel fit to speak to any gentleman."

I went up to him, and, laying my arm around his neck, said, "My dear friend, you are the purchase of my Savior's blood. He bought you by his death on Calvary. He has commissioned me to come to you, and say to you, as I now do, that, though you have been a great sinner, as you well know, yet he loves you still; that, if you repent of your sins and turn to God, he will have mercy on you and pardon you; and that, after all your past crimes and unhappiness, you shall be as white as wool, as pure as a child, as happy as it is possible for any mortal."

At first he seemed much surprised to be so treated by one he had called a "gentleman." In a moment or two I saw the tears start in his eyes. He began to melt. I pressed his head, with my arm still about his neck, close to my own bosom. He there wept freely, crying like a child. He was a conquered man a long time before I left. He has given no one any trouble since; but commenced immediately to seek that religion which he had so long neglected.

The reader may like to know how prisoners act when they are pardoned out of prison. Two men were pardoned out this morning. It is a very good practice of this institution, that the publishment of pardons to the persons interested is frequently put into the hands of the chaplain. This throws a new glory around his character. It causes him to be looked to by the poor convicts as indeed the minister of mercy. With writs of pardon for the two persons referred to I sought them out, and began conversation about religion. One was at his work; the other was on a bed of sickness. No language of mine can paint the joy that came into the countenance of the former when I read him his dismissal from

the work at which he was engaged—from the silence and constraint of the prison discipline—from the black walls of that gloomy penitentiary. His eye sparkled in a moment. His face beamed with almost an unearthly brightness. His tongue was unloosed. His soul swelled out with a consciousness of freedom. He was once more a man. He knew it; he felt it; and he seemed not to know exactly what to do with himself.

I found the other one on his bed of languishing. I asked him how he felt. He said he was no better, but, rather, growing weaker every day. He thought he could not live long unless a turn should come to him. I had but little to say to him about crime, and sin, and repentance, for I believed him to be an innocent man, sent to prison by false witnesses. He was also a good man, prayerful and religious; so I had little to do but to prepare his mind for the sudden change about to happen in his circumstances. I talked of adversity, then of prosperity, comparing their respective advantages and dangers—of the temptations, particularly, to which we are liable when all things go well with us—of the uses to be made of good fortune, especially when it comes suddenly upon us. The poor fellow looked as if he thought my long and particular homily had very little to do with his situation; but when I stated to him the chief object of my visit, he raised right up in bed, seemed lost for a moment, then, coming to realize his blessing, he gave such a shout as made every invalid start around him. The reader has never heard any thing like it except at some old-fashioned Methodist camp meeting; and, by the way, young converts are sometimes laughed at for shouting; but if a man will raise his voice thus when let out of prison; how will a sinner, when he is emancipated as suddenly from sin, from all its present guilt and future consequences, lift up his praises to Him who has delivered him!

Last Sabbath a prisoner, as he went out of church, said to me that his time would be out on the next Saturday, and that he wished to have a conversation with me before he left. To-day I called on him. He has been only very recently convicted of his sins. He has been praying and seeking religion for several days, but has not found peace with God in believing. I gave him a sort of epitome of the plan of salvation, exhorted him affectionately, but fervently, to hold to his work of repentance until God should save him from his sins, and read to him a great many of the most encouraging promises of the Gospel. He said he did not wish to leave prison until he should be converted, and desired to know if I thought the officers would allow him to remain, at least over the coming Sabbath, that he might hear me preach once more before he took his departure. I told him they probably would, if he wished to stay, but that he might hear the Gospel out of prison as well as in it. He replied that it would sound better and more natural to him there, and asked me to obtain the desired privilege for him. Promising to do so, and encouraging him to keep on praying and seeking, I left him; and now, reader, do you know of any thing which could make that doleful penitentiary look inviting to a convict but religion? You may have thought, too, that many of the cases I have related were pretended by the persons interested, in order to get their release from imprisonment in a profession of amendment; but, though such cases often happen, those I have given you are not of that character; and this man's sincerity is a fair specimen of the sincerity of all I have presented to you. The doubtful specimens I have not reported.

As I went to my apartment, late in the evening, weary, but thankful for the first-fruits of my labors, I was told of a young man, who had been under conviction for some days, and who was this day brought into liberty. He

raised his voice while all alone, and shouted with great animation. The guard came to him, and told him, as usual, that he was crazy. Another, however, who understood his case more perfectly, came and spoke kindly to him. The young man had been confined to his cell with indisposition; but he now said he was well, and wanted to go to work. The guard last mentioned told him that he was not yet able; that he was too weak; but that he should be permitted to go, as soon as it would be prudent. Ah, yes! when the soul is healed, the body partakes much of its purity, and health, and happiness.

It must not be supposed, by the reader, that all intercourse is cut off, in every case, between convicts and their relatives, by the afflicting event that separates them. Letters are constantly passing and repassing between them. The following is a specimen of this kind of correspondence. It is extracted from a letter from a mother to her son in prison:

"*July* 12, 1846.

"Once more, my dear child, I take my pen to address you; and my prayer to almighty God is, that it may be the last time I shall be compelled to write to you in your present position of misery and disgrace. Yes, William, I hope that, by the assistance of kind Heaven and your friends, you will be shortly restored to your disconsolate and broken-hearted mother. O, what would I not sacrifice, to have you, *my dear son*, once more with me! Will you not, as soon as you are free, come home to your father's house, like the prodigal of old? There is room here, and plenty. You are yet welcome to it all. And more than this, I trust you will feel that there is mercy in store for you in heaven. Jesus, my child, is still able and willing to save you. O William, think of your never-dying soul! Arise, and go to Jesus. What are all the pleasures, what all the pomp, what the wealth and pride of this gay and wicked

world, compared with the blessings God has to bestow even on you, my dear son! You have your sorrows. At an early period of life—O, all too early!—you have drank of the sweetened cup of sin; but you have found its dregs to be bitter to the soul. Will you not now lead a new life? Have you not seen enough of the folly and wickedness of sin? O, my son, when you come out—nay, before you come out—now, while you read this, from your *mother's* hand, resolve to abandon all your sinful practices and wicked associates. Renounce them all at once, and fly to the outstretched arms of Jesus. He will heal all your sorrows, pardon all your sins, and raise you again from the depths into which you have fallen. My poor heart my William, my once gentle little boy, has broken. O, is it possible? Have I, once a happy mother—have I, who rejoiced to hear you lisp in infancy—have I, whose heart swelled with maternal pride to see your young form grow, and your mind expand—have I lived to see that son a prisoner? O, my child! yes, *my* child—nourished at *my* breast—raised up under *my* eye, at my side. O William, I must believe that you yet have some regard, some natural love, some filial feeling, for your deeply-afflicted mother; and this encourages me to hope, that, for *her* sake, if not for higher reasons, you will try to do better in after life. I am, until death, my dear William,

"Your mother, ——."

The following is a letter addressed by a son, in the prison, to his mother. The young man once had religion; but he forsook God, and God forsook him; and now he is in confinement, wearing the striped clothes of a state convict:

"*Ohio Penitentiary, May* 29, 1846.

"My Dear Mother,—Scarcely do I know how to address you in a manner suitably to express the mingled feelings I experience at this time and in this place. Language is

certainly inadequate, with my feeble powers, to perform the mournful task now before me. Low as I have fallen, by reason of crime, bringing dishonor upon myself, inflicting disgrace on my relatives and friends, and, especially, in wounding so deeply my mother's tender heart, yet, of all my sins against my God, the sin of disobedience to my *good* parents seems just now to have the most venomous sting and the deepest guilt. It is true, mother, I have fallen before temptation, forgetful of parental counsels, and especially forgetful of *your* ever kind, but too much slighted instructions. These counsels and instructions, I now see and feel, would have conducted me along the bright and peaceful path of life and honor. They would have shielded me entirely from the misfortunes that have overtaken me; and now, though on a bed of languishing, and pain, and deep distress of mind, perhaps I ought to rejoice that God has taken this mild way—mild, compared with my deserts—of recalling me to himself. I had gone far astray from him; and he forsook me, and left me to wander in the forbidden paths of sin, though not without sending me frequent strivings of his Spirit. Ambition, covetousness, the inordinate love of the world, had taken full possession of me; and there is no knowing to what farther crimes I might have gone, had not God arrested me, in this manner, in my mad career. By this humiliating punishment I have been brought again, thank God! to the Savior's feet, where true peace and happiness are found. I feel, dear mother, great reason to be thankful that God has been thus merciful to me, a poor and erring sinner, who have so long transgressed his laws and disregarded his warnings. O mother, will you believe such a son, when he tells you, that he confidently believes, notwithstanding all these great sins, that, in answer to a Savior's love and a mother's prayers, God has at last snatched me as a brand from the burning, while just ready for eternal death? But, I thank God, it is even so.

"I have been in the hospital about two weeks. I have suffered much bodily pain; but the sweet consciousness that, through the atoning blood of a crucified Redeemer, my sins have all been forgiven, and my soul delivered from its weight of guilt, and my whole being made at peace with God, has helped me wonderfully, in this afflicted hour. I feel, nevertheless, a sort of presentiment that I shall never recover. I wish I could see you once more before I die. How *can* I die without seeing, once more, the face of my mother? All other friends I resign; but I cannot, dear mother, give up the hope of seeing you, before they lay me in the prisoner's cold and neglected grave. They treat me kindly. The patients are as well taken care of, in this hospital, as they can be. There is nothing lacking but the countenances of sympathizing friends. There is nothing wanting to make me happy but the presence, for one hour, ay, for half that time, of my tender-hearted mother. Father Finley is our chaplain. He treats us *like* a father. He preaches to the prisoners every Sabbath. He comes to see the sick several times every day. He has been very kind to me. He always speaks some words of comfort to me. He labors faithfully with the prisoners, to improve and elevate their moral and religious character. His exertions have been greatly blessed of God. Give my love to all my friends and relatives. Ask them to forgive me the injury I have done them. Ask them to pray, that the grace of God, in Christ Jesus, may still support me, that, should we never meet on earth, we may meet in heaven, But let me hope that *my mother*, abused and injured as she has been and is, will not leave her son, how much soever fallen, to languish here without seeing her, but will come and give one more sweet look, one more kiss—yes, a forgiving kiss—before he dies!

"Your disgraced and afflicted son, J. P."

CHAPTER IX.

Female department—Continued hardness—The chapel—Trip to Chillicothe—Colonel Dewey—A great mistake—A good library wanted—Effect of solitary confinement—A glorious spectacle—A great croaker—Note from a prisoner requesting instruction—Commitment of a doctor—An insane invalid—Story of a lunatic—Specimen of wit—Another poor fellow—A third—Mournful narrative—Complaints and compliments—A fourth case of insanity—Long imprisonments again—Pardons by the governor not good policy—An attempt at suicide—A lunatic discharged—Reform needed—Recruits for the Mexican war.

At eight o'clock this morning (May 31) I preached to the females in prison; and there appeared to be some prospect of a work of grace among them. But no one, without experience, can tell the obduracy of the female heart when hardened and lost in sin. As woman falls from a higher point of perfection, so she sinks to a profounder depth of misery than man.

At eleven I preached in the chapel. There was a large attendance; and most of the convicts seemed to take a deep interest in the word preached.

Monday and Tuesday of this week I spent in Chillicothe. When I returned, I found Col. Dewey, our new warden, fairly installed in his office. From the reputation he brings with him, and from every demonstration he has given of his character, we are all highly pleased with him. He seems to be just the man for us. He is mild in manner, but firm in principles; and his word is respected as much as his spirit is admired.

After having made a pretty thorough examination of every thing connected with this institution, I am satisfied that there has been one important mistake made by those who have had charge of the moral culture of the prisoners. There has been but little or nothing done to enlighten and employ the intellects of the convicts. All efforts have

begun and ended with what is directly religious. This I call a mistake, because the intellectual faculties play a momentous part in the moral reformation of a fallen human being. I do not say, that education, intellectually considered, is of itself capable of working a moral reformation: no one of close observation, or of clear judgment, will maintain such a proposition; but that the moral part can be powerfully addressed, and greatly swayed, through the mental, no man can deny, while some would think, that every thing done must get to the soul through the intellectual channel. Setting aside, however, all the metaphysics in the case, facts make it certain, that intellectual culture has much to do in forming and governing the heart, and that good books are the chief means of that sort of culture, whether in the family, school, or prison. We want here, therefore, a good library of books, which the prisoners can take with them to their cells. They all tell me, that, could they endure it physically to labor all the time, night and day, it would be preferable to being shut up in the cells for the night, with nothing on earth to think of but the gloomy walls. I am convinced that, with a store of good books, which should be calculated to interest the understanding and improve the heart, the poor convict could go to his confinement with a better prospect of getting improvement, than to go there into a perfect blank. The mind, like the body, must have something to live on; and if, as an old Greek philosopher once said, "words are the food of the soul," books are made up of words. But there is another consideration. It is well known that the ultimate tendency of the loss of liberty is derangement or alienation of the mind. This comes, I think, from a constant, gloomy, disheartening course of reflection on the darker side of life, into the darkest shade of which they see themselves to be deeply plunged. Now, while a suitable degree of this kind of retrospection is not only useful, but absolutely

essential to the reformation of a wicked man, the habit can be carried altogether too far. When meditation becomes morbid, nothing is better for it—nothing, certainly, within the reach of a state prisoner—than entertaining, amusing, instructive books. These, I am confident, ought to be scattered abundantly through every prison in the land.

Prompted by these and similar views, I began the foundation of a library by circulating a subscription book for that purpose among my personal friends. The result of this first effort was the receipt of over two hundred volumes of choice works. A small room was appropriated for their reception. I kept the whole thing a secret from the prisoners until the books had been received, sorted, and arranged on shelves. Then, on an appointed time, I let them all know at once, that we had procured a library for their special use, that the works could be drawn by them in person, and that the hour of getting them had come. Dear reader, you have seen things, no doubt, that pleased you—that did your heart good; but, if I am not mistaken, I never beheld such a scene as now appeared. I could think of nothing else than of a regiment of starving men, before whom a richly-loaded table should suddenly rise up, as by enchantment, and the word should be pronounced, "Now help yourselves!" Never before did I see such a rush of eager men!

I sometimes find a case with which it is necessary to deal with some spirit. I was, this day, for example, sent for to visit a prisoner of fine education, of strong mind, of a good family, but whose disposition was of the sourest kind. He complained of every thing, and of every body, but himself. Nothing in the world was right. He spoke with such haughtiness, with such severity, with such a supercilious flout, that I sat before him in absolute surprise. I perceived, however, that he wished to impress me with a sense of his importance; and so, if I had any thing to do for

him, I must do it in some special way. I listened to him patiently till he had finished all he had to say, and even longer; for I wished to give him full time to grind out his grist. My silence soon began to impress him more profoundly than his long speech had me. He looked amazed at my saying nothing. I at last observed: "I fear, sir, that I can do you no good; for, while every body is wrong, and you are always right, I think there is very little hope of your getting any benefit from God or man. Besides, sir, as you have complaints lodged against every body, high and low, it will give you business enough for the rest of your life to attend to them and see them through, leaving you no time to hear any thing from me. Should you, however, ever get them all settled, and desire to see me in relation to yourself, send for me and I will come." The fellow looked crest-fallen; but I thought it best to leave him for awhile

To-day I received the following note from a prisoner:

"Mr. Finley,—I have been inclined to infidelity all my life. About a year since I obtained the perusal of Nelson on Infidelity, which I read carefully through. 'One cause of infidelity,' says the author, 'is ignorance of the evidences in favor of revealed religion.' Now, dear sir, I wish to be furnished with something farther on this subject. My mind is not entirely satisfied. If you can, without too much trouble, furnish me with Jennings, Faber, or Keith, or all of them, all of which are quoted by Nelson—or any other works on the same topic which you may have—you will very much oblige a sincere inquirer.

"Yours, (No. 56,) L."

This evening there was admitted a very genteel-looking man, a physician, committed for a rape. He has been a man of good standing and of extensive practice. It will be a great contrast to him to exchange a large mansion for a prisoner's cell; his gay clothing for a suit of stripe; his cheerful fireside, where his wife and children used to cluster,

for the associations of this place. I watched him to see how he would be affected by the first appearances and impressions. He struggled hard to keep up a firm and cheerful countenance. His muscles seemed to be all set and braced; but when they took his hand-cuffs off, to lead him to his lonely cell, his respiration became short, his lip quivered, and, next moment, the gathered and pent flood burst forth. Poor man, how I pitied him! His crime, however, is an awful one, and it has overtaken him at last. No sooner did the grated door close upon him, than I fixed a resolution to give him an early call, and try to do him good. How much he now needs a friend; and how happy it will make his wife feel, if she still loves him, to learn that here, in this terrible place, her fallen husband found a friend to lead him back again to the right and peaceful way!

Thursday, June 4. This morning I arose at half-past three o'clock, to read, meditate, and pray. Before breakfast I went into the hospital to comfort the sick. There I found two insane men. One of them took me aside, as he does every body else who visits him. He is a great annoyance to visitors; but I silenced him very shortly. He was telling me, in his incoherent way, that somebody was after him to do him some great harm. "Well, then," said I, "you had better go and hide in some sly place in the room, and say nothing, so that he cannot find you if he comes this way." He took my advice, seemingly with a high opinion of my wisdom; and he has never given us much trouble since. He is determined, he says, not to be found out.

We have several lunatics in the penitentiary, some of whose cases are very amusing; others would afford much instruction to a philosopher, who should study carefully their forms of insanity. One of them has, certainly, a great deal of "method in his madness." I called on him the other day, when he gave me a long account of his past life, the summing up of which is this: "I began life as

happily as any body. At a proper age I married a wife, with whom I lived twenty-one years before I discovered her to be a witch. I then learned that she was a witch, and that she had been trying to poison me; but God was on my side, for I experienced the fulfillment of his promise as recorded in Mark xvi, 18, 'And if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.' This, sir—this knowledge of the character of my wife, led to my imprisonment. It would have been better had I never come to this knowledge. In this, certainly, as the poet says,

'Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise.'"

In this way he proceeded for a long time; but I was especially astonished to hear him quote Scripture, not only fluently and copiously, but correctly; and the application he made of it to his own case was always pertinent or witty, and sometimes learned. A specimen of the witty application of Scripture to himself, considering that he was a crazy man, he gave me as soon as I had set foot within his cell. He was kept shelling corn for the use of the bakery; and this had been his only business for a very long time. "Yes," said he with emphasis, as I stepped into his little room, "here I am at the old business. My work is like the Almighty's—'*from everlasting to everlasting.*'" I cautioned him against making such use of Scripture; but he considered it exactly suitable to his case.

While I was passing the shoe-shop another of these poor fellows came to me in great haste and said: "I understand, sir, they are going to dismiss me before my time is out; but don't you let them do it, for I will not go." I told him I would see to his case, and that they should not turn him away. So he returned to his work again peaceably.

A third came to me in the yard. This unfortunate lunatic has been here over twenty years; and I have no doubt that he was insane when he committed the crime for which he was committed. His history is this: he had been a

drinking man for some years. He and another fellow were drinking, on a certain occasion, at one of those devil's recruiting offices—a grog-shop. When much intoxicated, they both left the doggery, and went about a quarter of a mile, where they lay down to sleep. The one now here on waking first tried in vain to rouse his companion, and becoming angry rose up and struck him with a large pike, or stake, which happened to be lying near him. The man died instantly. The murderer then rifled his pockets of a five and of a ten dollar bill, and immediately staggered his way back again to the rum-shop. On trying to pass his bills for liquor, he was told that they were counterfeit. "Then," said he, "I wouldn't have killed the rascal if I had known they were bad money." He went on and told the whole story of the murder; and he was finally tried and sentenced on his own confession, though he manifested signs of insanity during the entire trial. Since he has been in prison he has been kept at some manual labor; but he is now quite peaceable. He thinks, however, that the state owes him for a great amount of labor. He said to me, as I saw him to-day, speaking with much excitement: "I want you to see to my business. I can trust you. They owe me a heap of money; and I am sure they mean to cheat me out of it. I helped to build this prison and all its rascally walls; and now they will not settle with me for my honest labor. I have worked hard for many toilsome years, and have nothing for it; and, sir, I shall not *stand* this kind of treatment any longer." He now began to rage. "My friend," said I to him, mildly, "stop a moment. There is one part of all this which you do not seem to understand. They fear, should they settle up with you, that you would quit work and leave them; and this would never do, and they know it. They couldn't get along very well without you. There is nobody here that can make as good mortar as you can; and what would they do, when the prison should need

rebuilding or repairing? No one here can match you, either, in plastering. So you see, my good sir, that they have some policy aboard in not settling with you." He smiled for the compliment, all of which he thought he much deserved, and was excessively pleased with himself. "Ah, honey," said he, "you are right—you are right. They couldn't get along very well without me; and so I think, for their sakes, I must stick to it a little longer." This seemed to pacify him; for I heard no more of his complaints from that time onward.

Another man ran to me from the wood-yard, as I was walking by, and said: "Sir, this whole establishment would have burned down had it not been for me; for, on seeing it taking fire, I ran and got my Bible, and, falling down on my knees, I asked God to put the fire out. And he did, sir; for in a few minutes he sent a shower of rain that completely drenched it."

I will relate no more cases of insanity at present; but I am well satisfied, that a new policy ought to be pursued, in our courts of justice, in respect to long imprisonments. Though some of the persons here represented were of unsound mind prior to their commitment, yet it cannot be denied that a long-continued loss of liberty tends to produce an aberration of the intellectual faculties. I could bring many proofs of the fact from the cells of this state prison, were that step necessary to strengthen my opinion. Besides, I have yet to learn that protracted imprisonment is favorable to reformation. When a man goes into confinement with the expectation of regaining his freedom in no great term of years, he has some motive, some ambition, to reform himself and prepare for his change of fortune, while the punishment he does suffer has all the effect of deterring from future crime which a longer period would have. But put a man in for the space of ten, fifteen, or twenty years, which cover and consume the flower of his days, leaving

him for liberty only the useless remnant of his life, and he either sinks into irrecoverable melancholy, or falls to the lowest pit of self-abandonment and wickedness. While fear is a passion which justice may legitimately play upon, hope, on the other hand, is never given up to despair, while mercy has any thing to do in the work of human reformation. With this limitation of the time of imprisonment, I would couple the provision, that no pardons should be granted except where the innocence of the convict should be established by satisfactory evidence. The hope of pardon, so freely indulged by every prisoner in the country, keeps up a constant excitement in our penitentiaries, urges the prisoners to the practice of a great deal of false pretension, and operates as a constant check on the good offices of religion. The chaplain, and the officers also, never know, in some cases, how to distinguish sincerity from deception; for these men, often practiced in dissimulation, are under a constant temptation to make false appearances; and sometimes their skill baffles every effort at detection. If there were no pardons, we should always know the real characters of those we have to deal with; and our efforts in their behalf would, consequently, be so much the more judicious and successful.

A poor fellow, only this morning, attempted to hang himself. I went immediately to him.

"Why, my dear sir," said I to him, "did you think of committing self-murder?"

"There is reason enough, sir," said he.

"What reason do you offer?"

"Why, sir, is not all the world against me? Has it not shut me up here for nearly my whole lifetime? What will five or ten years at most be worth to an old and decrepit man, should I ever live to see so many days after the expiration of my long commitment? No, sir. I would rather die than live."

"Are you not kindly treated by the warden and officers?"

"Yes; but I am a prisoner, and that for the best part of my life—the only part worth having."

"Do you think your life hereafter, provided you go to it by self-murder, will be any more tolerable? Will the fiends of hell treat you any better than you are now treated? For you must remember, my friend, that if you die by your own hand, there is no hope of your ever reaching heaven. The seal will then be set to your eternal ruin."

"What, then, would you have a wretch do, who looks forward to nothing better in this world than a life of imprisonment, and a death of ignominy?"

"If he cannot alter the life of imprisonment, I would have him look forward to a death of happiness, of triumph, of heavenly glory."

"How?"

"By repentance toward God and by faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Religion, my friend, can make you happy, cheerful, buoyant—at all events, peaceful—even in this gloomy prison. It has done this for others. It can do it equally for you. And, finally, when you are called to go to your last account, whether in or out of the penitentiary, you may go with a joyful hope of spending an age in heaven, which, compared with the short period of your present suffering, will be like the ocean to a dew-drop. Think not, then, my friend, of exchanging worlds so unadvisedly—of going from bad to what is infinitely worse—of forfeiting all chance of eternal happiness—of plunging yourself into everlasting and irretrievable destruction."

This had the desired effect upon the man's conscience, or fears, or hopes; for he has never made any attempts to commit suicide since this conversation.

Friday, June 5. On this day the time of another convict has expired; but he has long ago become very much deranged. He has been here seven years; and when he was informed that his time was out, he denied it, saying that we

only wished to cheat and injure him. He utterly refused to go to the wardrobe for a change of clothing. He said they would shoot him if he attempted to make his escape that way. The warden finally indulged his distemper by allowing him to dress in the yard; and then he would not stir an inch toward the hall of entrance. We took him through the big wooden gate by compulsion. The warden gave him some money and some tools. I walked out with him quite a distance, speaking kindly to him all the way, as I had done before, in view of his release from confinement. I would have willingly accompanied the poor man farther; but this I could not do consistently. I followed him, however, with my eye, as far as I could see him, to see how he would conduct himself. He started off on a half run; then he stopped and looked back toward the prison; for his insanity took the form of a delusion that some one was constantly pursuing him. The last thing he said to me was a promise that he would not kill any one if he could help himself without it. He is an unhappy, an unfortunate, and a dangerous man. He never should have been turned loose, in this manner, on a peaceable community. But there was no help for it. The government of Ohio has made no provision for such cases. The warden cannot keep them. He has no authority to recommend them to the lunatic asylum, where they properly belong. Many are annually turned out of prison just as unprepared for society, just as helpless, just as dangerous to community, as this fellow. Why is there no arrangement made by which, as soon as they show evident signs of derangement, they can be transferred, even before the expiration of their term of commitment, to proper guardians? Particularly, why should we be compelled to let them loose upon the world, when we know that no man's life is safe in their track, when they have lost all power of self-government? I call the authorities of Ohio, and of other states, to make a serious examination of this subject.

Saturday, June 6. This morning I learned that one of our number, a lad lately released, had enlisted for Mexico, instead of going home to his parents as he had promised me. The city is filled with these recruits, who are drinking, and swearing, and rioting in every lane and alley, as if they were just from Pandemonium. They are a fair sample of the majority of those engaged in this unholy crusade against a helpless nation; and their masters, from the highest to the lowest, have shown themselves to be just fit for the wicked work of extending, by war and bloodshed, the area of human slavery.

CHAPTER X.

The Sabbath—A look over the country—Two sermons—An appeal—Bishop Morris and Professor Merrick—The progress of iniquity—Deism—An effort to reason—Atheism absurd—Fine-spun sophistry—Prompt confessions—A strong mind—The warden—Contributions for a library—Insanity and solitary confinement again—Gloomy reflections—Two considerations—New fare—Mush and molasses—General gratitude—A word from Shakspeare—The omnipotence of love.

As I arose this morning (June 7) I was impressed with the quiet of the day which reigned on every side; for not only the inmates of the penitentiary, but the inhabitants of the city, are, in general, faithful observers of this sacred time. Look, however, over the state, over the Mississippi valley, over our great country, nay, over all of so-called Christian countries, and what a vast amount of Sabbath desecration will be found! I have before shown, in the example of several now here in prison, that many, perhaps I might say most, of all the unhappy men sent to this gloomy place, began their course of wickedness and crime by breaking the holy Sabbath. To say nothing of Christianity, if we wish to see crime lessened in our state and country, every good citizen must exert himself in behalf of the observance of the Sabbath. It is strange, in fact, that our citizens do not more generally see this fact, and act accordingly. For every rail-car kept in action, for every stage-coach in motion, for every factory maintained in business, for every store or grocery left open, for every particle of Sabbath desecration, in every form, great and small, the community, men of good habits, have to pay most dearly. We not only have to tax ourselves to build and keep up jails and other prisons, but we suffer an incalculable damage in the corruption of public morals. If we ourselves escape contamination, our children are thrown

into a great vortex of depravity and ruin. As I sit here, this morning, and look over, in fancy, our wide-spread country, calling up before me the bustle and business of a thousand noisy towns, and of scores of immense cities, where the day is but little if it all regarded as it should be, I am appalled; and I behold hundreds, thousands, of those now in good repute, wending their way along toward this and other penitentiaries, through the single crime of Sabbath desecration. May a better spirit soon rise up among us and pervade the minds of all classes!

At eight o'clock to-day I preached to the women from Ephesians v, 15, 16; and at eleven o'clock I addressed the men from Hebrews ii, 3. It was a season of profit, I thought, on each occasion; and after the second service, as soon as the citizens had retired, I made a brief lecture to the prisoners on the necessity of giving perfect obedience to the discipline of the institution. "How degrading," said I, "for a *man* to be called up for some unnecessary misbehavior, to be showered, to be whipped, to be punished corporeally in any form, as we would punish an unruly beast! Man is a reasonable being. He has noble faculties. He is nearly allied to the heavenly angels. His thought—how quick, how deep, how wide, how high! His heart—how full of all Godlike impulses, when in its better and proper state! His conscience—what a rescript, what a representative, of the divine law of eternal right—what a copy of the mind of God! Look at his origin, his relations, and his destiny! He is born, it is true, in great helplessness and insignificance; but then he is the handiwork of God! His sphere of action seems to be very limited; but then he stands, every moment, related to the highest beings in heaven and on earth, besides being the head of the world in which he lives! His life is but a span, and when he dies he seems to go with the brute to the earth from which he sprang; but there is yet another

part, untouched by death, which is to survive the tomb, and live, and grow, and enjoy, while eternity itself endures. Will you, then, such noble beings, suffer yourselves to be used like cattle—like angry dogs—to be stripped, beaten, showered, whipped? Will you *suffer yourselves*, I say, to be thus treated? for no one will so treat you, unless you prepare the way, and make it necessary. There are persons now here, who have remained here more than seven long years without receiving a single blow, a single reprimand, or a single word. If all will live as they have lived, there will be heard, within the walls of this prison, not a solitary syllable of reproof. Why will you not all imitate them? Remember you are men, and we wish to treat you as men; and the way to be thus treated is, for each one of you to *be* men." This is a specimen of the influence a chaplain is expected to exert over his charge, in maintaining order; and I know, from personal experience, that, with a suitable degree of energy and wisdom, he can do more than all the guards employed in our largest state prisons.

This day I was visited by Bishop Morris and Professor Merrick. We first went to the female department. The good Bishop prayed in his usually feeling, and solemn, and affectionate manner. While we were passing among the prisoners, I received a communication from one of them, giving an account of his commencement and progress in crime. I have no doubt that every word of it is true; and I will record it, for the benefit of young men. May they read it, and shun the path here marked out!

"I was born in the state of M., in the town of B. In my youth, even from my cradle, I was taught the principles of the Christian religion; and, in early life, my mind was thoroughly imbued with its blessed truths. A few years later I was left an orphan, by which event I was thrown upon the world, without a master or a guide. I soon fell into dissolute company, and partook of all their sins. With

scarcely a reflection upon what I was doing for myself, I became a drinker of ardent spirits; and the terrible habit was soon fixed upon me. My character became notorious. I knew it, and felt it; but I had gone too far to return by my own strength. My means of support were soon exhausted; and I found it absolutely impossible to maintain myself, without either changing my course, redeeming my character, and so recovering some access to public confidence, or by plunging into crime, and living by making depredations upon other people. While in this state of meditation, my early training had a powerful influence on me. More than once I resolved to make a thorough reformation, and begin life anew; but the wicked world, and my own habits and associations, were at length too strong for me. The doctrines of that sort of infidelity, known as Deism, were recommended to me. I became a listener, then a reader, then quite a student, for one of my character, of these damnable principles. During all this struggle against my early education, conscience would sometimes assert itself—my mother's voice and prayers would echo in my ears—the sweet scenes of innocent childhood would rise up, like pictures of a lost paradise, before me. These influences at length overcame my Deism, but in a most mournful manner. 'If there is a God,' said I to myself, 'then he is supreme, and I am accountable to him for my conduct. But I am not accountable, every thing being necessary; and so the notion that there is a God is a mere fiction.' Still, when I looked abroad on the works of nature, as I called them, I was forced to the conclusion that there must be a first cause of all things; and this first cause must be almighty, as it had brought every thing into being. It must have been eternal, or it never could have had existence. If eternal, then it was uncreated, and therefore immortal. That it was intelligent, was evident enough from the complicated and yet harmonious *plan* of the great universe, in

which all see not only *design* but *fitness* in every component object. As there was intelligence, so there was also goodness; for on all sides we perceived that the relations, operations, and functions of all bodies had been appointed with a view to happiness. There seemed equal tokens, though not quite so obvious, of a *moral* element in this great first cause; for, though virtue was not always happy, and though vice was not always miserable, they were *generally* rewarded according to their characters; and I thought I could see, too, below the outside of life, in the region where the inward and not the outward part of man has its peculiar sphere of action, a still more general consistency in this particular. Indeed, I could not say certainly that the consistency was not absolutely perfect; and I therefore concluded, could I see all things at a single glance, it might evidently be proved to be so. Atheism, consequently, could not be possible; and as Deism made me accountable, I was thrown into all the tortures of conscience from which I had struggled to free myself. But I was too far degraded and lost in sin, to go directly to the work of spiritual restoration. My wicked habits continued. My associates still clung around me. At last, as a final resort, I went to hear a Universalist, who preached some of the doctrines to which my reason and early education had held me. He said there was a God; that man is accountable; that we are all transgressors against the moral government of God; but that Christ had died, and thereby made an unconditional restoration or redemption of the whole human family from sin and degradation. His argument was ingenious. He said, either God would save all men, but could not, which would be a denial of his omnipotence, or he could do it, but would not, which would be an impeachment of his goodness; or he neither could save us, nor would, if he could, which would make him a most miserable and imbecile monster. This sophism captivated me entirely. I did not see how it

would apply to other things around me. Had I only done so, I should have been saved from much crime and misery. My reason now, in its clearer moments, makes the application, in the following simple manner: if God can save us from *present* unhappiness, and will not, he is not good; if he cannot, but would, he is not almighty; if he neither can, nor would, if he could, he is just as bad as the argument of the Universalist made him. The reasoning is totally unsound; but I did not then see it. My understanding was carried away; my heart was blinded; my conscience was seared; and I fell to my old habits, and into deeper iniquities, without fear, and with a new relish. 'If all my sins cannot damn me, I will run the risk of the present life, surely,' said I, instantly; 'and as I may as well make a wholesale operation of my business, I need not stick at trifles.' I need say no more. You know the rest. I will only add, that it was not the vigilance, the art, or the skill of officers that brought me to justice. It was God. He followed me with his rod, when his goodness was no longer effectual. My sentence to this prison has been a blessing to me. I have had time to reflect, to read the Bible, and, like the prodigal son, to come to myself again. Many have thought that my sorrows have come from my imprisonment. This is not the case; for my present condition is the happiest I have seen for the past ten years. My pride and ambition, by which I was often and finally held back from repentance, have been humbled. I have again, thank God! found the way to a better world. I have here nothing to stimulate my unholy passions. We all live on the same food, wear the same clothes, sleep in the same kind of beds, and get the same wages for our labor. There is no distinction, no anxiety about to-morrow, no fear of getting turned out of our employment. We have no harsh treatment. We have good advice and kind instruction. Above all, we have the Bible; we have our Sabbaths; we have faithful

preaching; we have many useful books for general perusal; we have a good Sabbath school; we have every blessing peculiar to the Christian religion! We are taught to worship God. We are told that this is the way to happiness and heaven. My prayer is, not that I may get released from prison, but that I may be enabled to make a wise improvement of my present glorious privileges, and ultimately find my way to glory.

"Yours, D."

I am certain that the intelligent reader will regard this as an able document to be drawn up by a convict in a state's prison; and I must observe, that I have followed strictly the ideas and generally the words of the paper handed me, making only some corrections of a grammatical and rhetorical character. The substance of the piece is from the prisoner's own handwriting. That he is a clear-headed man is very evident. His early discipline must have been more than usual. But all the influences of education, of home, of parental example and instruction, did not save him from this ruin. Reader, look about you, and see whether your case is more certain, if you meddle with a temptation to stray ever so little from the paths of rectitude.

Tuesday, June 9. There has been no punishment for a breach of rule this week.

Wednesday, June 10. Our warden has given us, to-day, ample demonstration of his mildness, firmness, and general capacity for the arduous duties resting on him. He is just the man for us.

Thursday, June 11. This day I raised about one hundred dollars among the contractors in the prison for the prisoners' library. This will add a new impulse to this department of instruction and improvement.

Friday, June 12. I never have felt more impressed with the fact, that the melancholy and insanity so prevalent in this prison are owing to a want of proper mental occupation,

by the use of good and interesting books, than I was to-day while visiting the convicts. Remember, reader, that these prisoners are men and women who have lost the confidence and respect of the public; that they are perfectly sensible of their loss; that they are separated from all family ties; that they can look forward to nothing which is calculated to flatter and buoy up the heart; and, therefore, that their sole resource is, to get as much consolation out of the present as possible, and that entirely by themselves. This solitary feeling, this sense of their exclusion from all the world, is the wormwood of the soul. They have ceased to be social beings. Not having it in their power to hold intercourse with the public, they are forbidden all conversation among themselves. Under this condition, the warm feelings of the heart, which they once may have had, are gradually frozen up. The eye loses its lustre. Companionship has no charms. Friendship no balm. In the voice of love there is no melody; and in the hand of charity there is no kindness. What, to such men, are the beauties of nature, the bright hues that deck the skies, the majesty of the moving clouds, or the sun pouring his new-born glories upon the dewy earth? What all other charms that have escaped the mortal curse, preserving some memory of the Eden from which men fell? Nature may tune her thousand harps and bid them sound upon the convict's ear. She may unfold before him scenes that would make the proudest artist blush. She may cause the rose to spring up in his gloomy path, and send sweet-singing birds to carol their hymns of rejoicing on the tree that shades his grated window from the sun's rude blaze. But what are all these things to him? To him, sunlight is shade, and joy is sorrow, and flowers are as piercing thorns. All is vain, empty, dreary, dismal, unto him. His mind, his heart, his soul, his whole being, cut off from every outward association, is preying on itself! The chameleon, it is true, borrows its hues from

CONVICTS AT DINNER.

surrounding objects—from the leaf or twig on which it sits. But the mind is not thus passive. It is the active principle in nature. Instead of deriving its morals exclusively from things without, it has the power of transferring its own sentiments, its loves, and hopes, and joys, to the world around. Particularly is this true of that mind, whose sympathies with society, with men and things, has been severed. Its only resource is in itself. Whatever you can impart directly to such a mind will do it good; and this direct influence can be exerted particularly but in two ways. 1. By conversation, which it is possible to continue to a great length, or to repeat so often as to leave no aching void in the experience of a melancholy, brooding, disheartened man. 2. By books, which are the more serviceable, because they can be his constant companions from day to day without wearing upon his patience, which, while they represent their respective authors speaking their best thoughts in their best manner, are entirely at the beck of the poor, unfortunate being who implores their aid. I would repeat, therefore, most emphatically, my former recommendation to all prison societies, to legislatures, and to all concerned in the welfare of this degraded class of men, to supply to every penitentiary a well-selected library of standard, miscellaneous, amusing, and instructive books.

Saturday, June 13. Yesterday the warden ordered a change to be made in the suppers of the convicts. This meal had before consisted of a piece of corn bread and a cup of water. It was now to consist of mush and molasses. I need not say, to those acquainted with well-conducted prisons, that such food as is given the inmates is always of the very best quality; but really, with this consideration, and with all the appetite produced by hard labor, a dry crust of coarse bread with water is not a feast. This morning I passed my time entirely with the prisoners. Nothing was talked of but their change of diet. Never were a set of

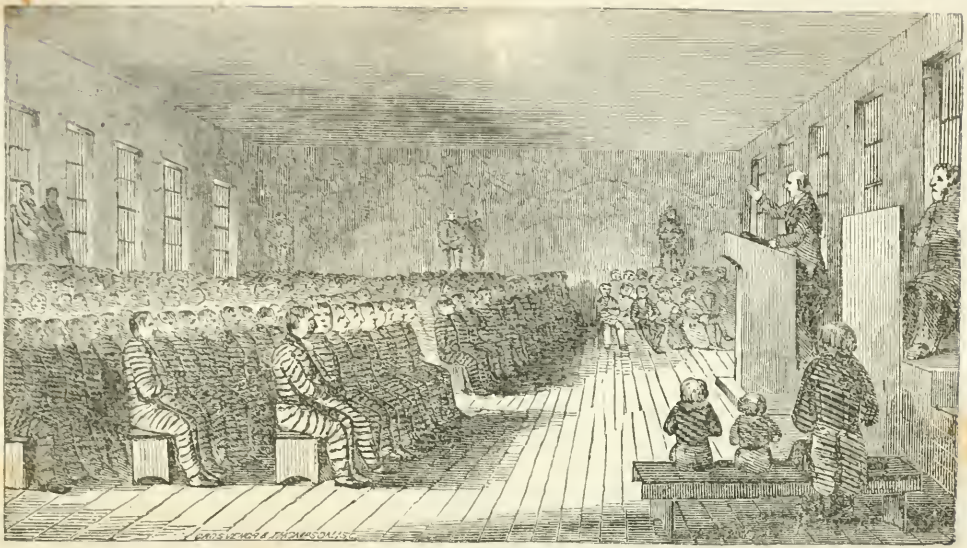
men more grateful. They covered the warden with their heart-felt praises. This single act has given him a seat in their affections from which scarcely any thing could move him. I really believe these poor fellows would fight for him against the world, right or wrong, until they had spilled every drop of their blood for him. This shows, reader, the power of kindness. It is a weapon by which you can conquer your worst enemy.

> "Didst thou but know the inly touch of love,
> Thou wouldst as soon go kindle fire with snow,
> As seek to quench the fire of love."

And the poor prisoners have often felt, toward him who has treated them affectionately, what another poet has expressed:

> "Sweet as refreshing dews, or summer showers,
> To the long-parching thirst of drooping flowers,
> Grateful as fanning gales to fainting swains,
> And soft as trickling balm to bleeding pains,
> Are thy kind words."

Love is the Archimedean lever by which Christianity is to move the world!



CONVICTS AT WORSHIP.

CHAPTER XI.

A useless practice dropped—Great attendance of visitors—Preachers of universal joy—Commitment for manslaughter—First hour in prison—A pass through the shops—Happy experience—An incident—Miserable law—Call at the tailors' shop—Dialogue with a Catholic—An unfortunate young German—A man pardoned—A barbarous custom—The warden—An anecdote—A quotation from Dr. Upham—A veteran scoundrel—The young German converted—A prisoner leaving—Return of guard and convict from Cincinnati—Close of the week.

Another bright Sabbath morning has dawned on the world. At eight o'clock, while the people of the city are taking their late breakfasts, or lounging in the seats of idleness, with a minority making preparation for the worship of God and the instructions of his house, I go to the department where a group of fallen, abandoned, desolate-looking women are waiting to listen, but with no great eagerness, to the words of everlasting life.

At eleven o'clock I preached to the men, and had a Presbyterian minister to assist me. After sermon I made them a speech of congratulation on their good behavior for the week previous. They had conducted themselves with unusual decorum. Every one beheld an improvement amounting almost to a reformation. There was great seriousness sitting on their countenances; or, rather, it was calmness, accompanied by earnestness, and relieved by cheerfulness. I have never before seen such an aspect among the prisoners. We had this day dispensed with the mechanical practice of ringing the hand-bell as signals for their observance in entering the chapel, taking their hats off, and other parts of what I had always looked upon as a useless and degrading pantomime. If man were a baboon, or a chattering monkey, these mechanical contrivances would have some show of reason. But I have long since learned, that if you wish to make a man really a man, you must treat him as a man

The success of our present experiment corroborated my conclusion. The poor fellows were grateful for this new and unexpected token of respect toward them. It was the more agreeable to them, perhaps, from its very trivialness, as it showed the existence of a new spirit, rather than that of a new exigency, dominant among the officers. They marched to the chapel, entered the room, and proceeded to their seats, with as much decency as was ever witnessed in any congregation.

Monday, June 15. To-day we had a great many visitors, and among them a large number of Universalist preachers. The latter looked all through the prison with great interest. I thought in my heart, as they were going round, that their doctrines had sent many of these wretched men to this fearful place; and this was a fact which I could prove by a score of confessions, perhaps twice or three times a score, given me by the convicts themselves. About thirty of these inmates are here for murder. "How cruel, how wicked, how unjust," said I to myself, as these ministers were walking about, "to commit these thirty men to this gloomy prison during life for the meritorious act of sending an equal number of their suffering fellow-mortals from the cares of this world to the everlasting joys of heaven!" O folly! what a doctrine of devils is this! What a responsibility these men have assumed! I was glad to find, that, as soon as their characters became known, they were looked down upon by many of the degraded prisoners themselves.

A man was brought in to-day for manslaughter. He is committed for ten years. After he was washed, shaved, and dressed, I took him from his cell, read to him the rules of the prison, explained his new situation to him as well as I could in a few words, and conducted him back again to think of the past and present by himself. This initiatory period of solitary reflection must be awfully

solemn to most of these bad men. Their first impressions must be mournful and terrible indeed. They look back to the scenes of their childhood—to their happy days at the village, or country, or city school—to the first promises of fortune as young manhood opened upon them with its hope-inspiring charms—to the day when they led to the flower-wreathed altar the loved one on whom the affections of their heart had been set—to the opening years of married life, of which innocence, and health, and happiness were almost the only marks—to the first temptation—to the first secret departure from strict rectitude—to the first open and unblushing sin—to the first occasion of public disgrace; and from that on to the last act in the melancholy drama, whose catastrophe lodges them in a den of murderers and thieves. O that first hour in prison! What tender recollections, what sad repining, what regrets, what remorse, separate and distinguish that hour from every other in their mortal life! As I turned from the door of this man's cell, I could but remember, that he had left behind him a lovely and innocent wife and four small children to mourn and weep their loss; and I must own, that, in spite of my constant observation of such scenes of distress, my own eyes were moistened as I walked leisurely away.

To-day I visited all the shops. In one of them I found a man, over forty-five years of age, who told me he could now say that God, for the sake of Christ, had pardoned all his sins. "I am now completely happy," said the man. "My cell is no longer gloomy. It is as cheerful as any place I ever occupied in my life. A weight of a thousand pounds is taken from my heart. I am now filled with peace and joy like an overflowing stream. I have no desire to leave the prison, so long as it remains such a happy place." I exhorted him to be instant in prayer, as the great deceiver was at hand; and he would not look, as an idle spectator, on the annihilation of his power.

I visited several others of the young converts to-day, and found them all steadfast, prayerful, and rejoicing in the Lord.

The great part of Tuesday (June 16) I spent in town. When I returned in the afternoon I learned that one of the guards had left the prison in charge of a prisoner for Cincinnati. The object of this visit was the detection, by this convict's help, of a gang of murderers and robbers, who had killed four young men in Xenia but a short time before. I sincerely hoped they might be arrested; but I could but tremble for the security of the innocent, when their lives were to be put in jeopardy on the credit of one, who, to clear himself, would be tempted to swear to any thing that might be necessary for that end. Though I wish in all things to respect the laws of the land, I cannot highly venerate such a provision as this, by which a man proved to be a villain shall be allowed to exculpate himself by swearing a crime on some other head. There should be no such provision in the laws of any land; and if, without it, some rogues might go unpunished, certainly the innocent would not be in so great peril of unmerited insecurity and disgrace.

I then visited M., the Catholic whose case I have named before. He professes to be still seeking the religion which he rightly calls the religion of the heart.

Next I went into the tailor shops, where I found a young man who is now here on his second term. He is very gloomy. He knows that he can never be restored to his rights as a citizen, though he has but a short time to stay. This he considers as a greater punishment than his imprisonment. It is terrible, indeed, for a young man to lose all rights of voting, being a juror or witness in any court of justice, and of all other political privileges at a stroke; but the law has also provided, that a pardon shall at any time restore a convict to all these forfeited rights;

and it is customary, in nearly every state of the Union where the foregoing law prevails, to pardon such as have shown, by proper behavior and reformation, that the rights of a citizen would probably not be again abused. Such a custom is altogether proper and praiseworthy.

Soon after this I held an interesting little dialogue with a Catholic, who was one of the shrewdest of his sect, though he was marked by the same credulity and ignorance of religion which characterize all the rest.

"How are you getting along to-day?" said I to him as I approached.

"O," said he, "my priest has not been here for a long time, and I begin to feel very bad."

"What do you feel bad about?" said I.

"Because I have no one to hear my confession, and to pardon my sins."

"What makes your priest stay away?"

"Why, I told him, when he came to see me last, that I should have no more money to pay him for confession, and he cannot surely come without his pay."

"What then are you going to do?"

"I don't know what, unless that I must perish in my sins."

"O no," said I to him kindly, "you need not perish in your sins for the want of a priest to whom you may confess. Jesus Christ is said by the apostle Paul to be ordained a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec; that, though he goes not into a temple made with hands, he has gone, once for all, into heaven itself, which is the holy of holies in very deed; and that he stands there making intercession for us before the throne of God."

"But does not the priest represent him here on the earth?"

"No—not in forgiving sins. What makes you think he does?"

"Because the priest has told me so; and the Church teaches the same doctrine."

"The Church," said I, meaning of course the true Church, "teaches no such thing; and as for your priest, he only wants to make you believe this notion that he may get your money."

"But do you not believe in the communion of saints—that the saints here on earth have intercourse with the saints in heaven—that when the former present petitions for their friends to the latter, they—the heavenly saints—will carry and recommend them to Christ?"

"No."

"Don't believe in the communion of saints, so often spoken of by the apostles!"

"Yes; but not in the communion spoken of by you as handed down by your priests. What do your priests know about the saints in heaven? They cannot see them, nor tell you where to find them, if you wish to supplicate them yourself."

"Very true, we cannot see them; but they can see us, and hear us, and do for us these errands of mercy to the throne of God."

"How do you know that?"

"The fathers of the Church tell us so."

"Who told the fathers of the Church?"

"The Bible and the apostolic traditions."

"As to the apostolic traditions, which are the inventions of these very priests, who wish to get your money, it may be so; but the Bible, which is our only authority in religion, teaches no such thing."

"But are we not to believe those whom God has appointed to teach religion to the world?"

"Yes, if they teach the truth, as contained in the Bible; but not if, like Judas, they sell their Lord for money."

"Are the priests, then, as bad as Judas?"

"Worse, because he, after he had sold his Master once, repented of his sin; but these priests keep up the wicked traffick through many generations, and amidst the light and knowledge of a brighter and later day."

"What shall I do, then, if the priest is not to be depended on for the pardon of my sins?"

"Why, sir, kneel down yourself in secret, confess all your sins to God, repent of them and abandon them in your life and in your heart; then humbly but believingly ask God to pardon you in the name and for the sake of his Son, Jesus Christ. When God forgives you, and gives you liberty from your past transgressions, you shall be free indeed."

The man told me he would think of it; and confessed, that the unwillingness of the priest to visit him, when he learned there was no hope of gain by doing so, was rather a suspicious circumstance in his case.

Wednesday, June 17, was spent in my ordinary duties, without any special occurrence.

Thursday, June 18, I went to the yards and shops, visiting among my people. Here I found a young German, recently from the fatherland, whose case excited my compassion greatly. He could speak but little English, and that very poorly; but, with diligent attention on my part and frequent repetition on his, I made out to get a pretty clear account of his difficulty. A part of his father's family had removed from Germany to the United States some years before he left home. He came in pursuit of them. They had settled in the far west—the place I do not now remember, if I understood it. All the money he brought with him was in gold and silver. On his passage from New York to the west, he fell in with some scoundrels, who proposed to give him current bills for his European coin, which, in some instances, had annoyed him. Thinking no evil, he gladly accepted their proposal; and

the exchange was made accordingly, they allowing him a profit on it. On leaving the canal boat on which he had been traveling through Ohio, he offered a five dollar bill to pay his passage. The captain told him it was counterfeit, and charged him with being a counterfeiter. Not being able to understand the charge, and not speaking English well enough to tell his story very convincingly, he was taken before a magistrate, tried, and put in jail; and from the jail he was sent for three years to the penitentiary for the sole crime, I believe, of having fallen among rascals, who had plundered and deceived him.

I cannot state all the circumstances which went to show this young man's innocence; but that he is innocent I am convinced beyond a question. He is greatly distressed. He says he has written to his brothers in the west, but they return him no answer. The probability is, either that he does not write the name of their residence with sufficient legibility for our western postmasters, or they have removed from the place they first settled in, or they are dead and buried. At all events, this young man has been, in my opinion, most shamefully treated by our legal tribunals, besides being robbed by American freebooters. He ought to be pardoned instantly, and furnished with the means of going in search of his lost brothers. I tried to comfort him, told him to look to me as his friend, but exhorted him, in the meantime, while I should be trying to do something in his favor, to commit his case to God, who never left nor forsook those who trusted in him. I gave him a German Bible, and he wished me to give him, also, a German prayer-book. "I have no German prayer-book," said I; "and if I had, I would not give it to you. You do not need any. Such a gift would be no help, but a damage to you. The heart is the only prayer-book: 'For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.' If your heart trusts in

God, your mouth can express to him the feelings of your heart; and these, the belief and the confession, are all that he requires."

This day a man was pardoned out by the governor. It was perfectly evident that he never should have been committed. His term was one year. It is stated, as the reason why he was committed at all, that, otherwise, the cost of prosecution would have fallen on the county where he was tried. Is it possible, that, in this day of light, of civilization, of humanity, a citizen will be unjustly sent to prison, from any portion of the enlightened state of Ohio, for the single motive of saving to the county the cost of prosecution! If so, it is time the people knew what portions are thus mean, and mercenary, and unmerciful, nay, barbarous! But I must here record an opinion, which I have gathered from a good deal of deliberate observation, in relation to this subject. Cut where it will, I must say that I firmly believe that not a few, but many, convicts are sent to this penitentiary for this only reason. They are sentenced one moment; and the very next, the judges and jury turn round and sign a petition to the governor for a pardon!

I was struck to-day, while passing round, with the order and tranquility of the establishment since our present warden took his place. His manner I have described before. His firmness causes him to be respected. His mildness makes him loved. Nothing evinces his popularity with the prisoners more than the perfect security he seems to feel while circulating among them. Unlike most other officers, he carries no weapons of defense with him, concealed or unconcealed—not so much as a walking-stick. He goes into the most secluded places of the prison, where his life is at the mercy of the inmates, without the slightest fear of injury. Instead of hurting him, as I have said before, I think they would fight for him, were it necessary.

I must add, that, besides the good changes Col. Dewey has brought about in diet and other particulars already mentioned, he has put an entire *estoppel* on cudgeling, kicking, knocking, and caning of the prisoners. They are treated as men. If one becomes unruly, his liberty is restricted or some darling privilege is taken from him, which soon brings submission. Then he is visited and told that this severity was used, not from choice, but by necessity; that good behavior will always meet with good usage; and that, when hardships of this nature befall, it is only because they choose them. In this way our excellent warden not only maintains his seat in the affections of those who are the best disposed, but regains many a lawless fellow to sober reflection and good order. I have often myself heard the prisoners say, "See there! the warden goes round among us unattended by a guard, unprotected even by a stick. That shows that he has confidence in us. We will show him that he is not mistaken." This, reader, illustrates a principle, which you may well carry out in your own private intercourse. And just here I will tell you a story, on this same subject, related to me by a friend in nearly this language:

"My neighbor was a great farmer. His barns and cribs were always well provided; and, in fall and winter, they were overflowing. He kept a man on his premises as a tenant and as an overseer of his workmen. This man was poor, and had a large family. My neighbor, who, with all his abundance, was rather exact in his measurements and the calculation of his profits, began to miss grain from year to year, from the bins of his large granaries; and yet they were locked each night with great caution and punctiliousness. But the keys used to hang, in the old-fashioned country style, over the mantel above the fireplace, in the common room of the great mansion. This key might, it was true, be taken from its peg by one familiar in the

family and be used on occasion. But then there was no one about him, likely to have a temptation to extract any thing from his hoarded treasures clandestinely, except this poor tenant, whose large and increasing family might, possibly, be a little too onerous for his ordinary wages. My neighbor could not, however, suspect a servant, who had served him for many years with great faithfulness, until, as accident would have it, he actually saw him one night take the key from its place after the family had gone to rest. As the tenant left the house, my friend arose from his bed and watched him. All was soon settled. The tenant did take the grain and return the key. My neighbor went to bed again, but not to sleep. He thought upon the afflicting circumstance until morning. Before he arose, however, he had fixed his plan for curing his poor tenant of his bad habit; and when the tenant appeared, at a very early hour in the morning, the master of the house thus addressed him:

"'How many children have you got now, William?'

"'Eight, counting our last toddler, who bears your name, sir.'

"'Well, do you make out to support them pretty well on the wages you are now getting, William?'

"'Not very well, but we manage to get along somehow.'

"'Well, do you think you could render me any more service, should I increase your wages?'

"'I do not know. Perhaps I could. It would depend, I suppose, somewhat on the *kind* of work you might offer me.'

"'Well, William, you have been a pretty faithful hand for these many years; you have a large and increasing family; and I was thinking only last night whether I could not give you an additional duty, not a very hard one, but yet a very responsible one, for which I could afford to make an addition to your wages. Here, William, are the keys to

the two granaries. I want you to have charge of them so long as you remain in my service. I want you to measure all my grain, and keep a record of what is taken for all purposes whatsoever. I leave the whole business with you; and, as a compensation for this new work, I will from this time add eight dollars per month to your present wages.'

"I need not say, the work was done. William was cured for ever. Two principles of his nature had been addressed at once. He felt grateful for the favor done him; and he was raised too high in his own estimation by the confidence reposed in him by his master ever to sink again into the only unfaithfulness of which he had ever been guilty."

The power of love is omnipotent. "Beyond all question," says Rev. Dr. Upham, "it is the unalterable constitution of nature, that there is efficacy, divine, unspeakable efficacy, in love. The exhibition of kindness has the power to bring even the irrational animals into subjection. Show kindness to a dog, and he will remember it; he will be grateful; he will infallibly return love for love. Show kindness to a lion, and you can lead him by the mane; you can thrust your head into his mouth; you can melt the untamed ferocity of his heart into an affection stronger than death. In all of God's vast, unbounded creation, there is not a living and sentient being, from the least to the largest, not one, not even the outcast and degraded serpent, that is insensible to acts of kindness. If love, such as our blessed Savior manifested, could be introduced into the world and exert its appropriate dominion, it would restore a state of things far more cheering, far brighter, than the fabulous age of gold; it would annihilate every sting; it would pluck every poisonous tooth; it would hush every discordant voice. Even the inanimate creation is not insensible to this divine influence. The bud, and flower, and fruit put forth most abundantly and beautifully where the hand of

kindness is extended for their culture. And if this blessed influence should extend itself over the earth, a moral garden of Eden would exist in every land; instead of the thorn and brier, would spring up the fig tree and the myrtle; the desert would blossom, and the solitary place be made glad."

I conversed to-day with forty-one prisoners on the subject of personal improvement—intellectual and religious—showing them that, to make any sure progress, the first thing was, "to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness." All these men received me kindly, though some caviled, while others confessed and wept over their past follies. Among the number was an old man, whom I knew many years ago; and he was then a villain, which he is up to this day. He has been a counterfeiter nearly all his life. He was caught in the act of making counterfeit money; and he does not blame his fellow-citizens for sending him to prison. He thinks, however, that he is just as good as they are, only they have not been overtaken in their rascality. He maintains that there is no difference in the moral characters of men; and that vice and virtue themselves are nothing but empty words without meaning. He professes to believe in God, in a future state, and in heaven; but affirms that all men, as soon as they die, go directly to the world of everlasting happiness. In other words, this old veteran among scoundrels is a notorious Universalist, as is reasonably to have been expected.

Friday, June 19. This morning I went early with a friend to see the prisoners march out of their cells; and as I was conversing with my companion near where the prisoners passed out into the yard, a young German of serious mind said to me as he went along, "Bless God, father Finley! He has pardoned all my sins, and I am now happy. Last night was the happiest of my life." My heart leaped with joy for the poor fellow. He was a stranger. He had

fallen among thieves. They had stripped him and treated him unmercifully; but Jesus, the good Samaritan, had found him, and relieved his distresses, and poured the oil of rejoicing upon his heart's wounds. As soon as I was released from my friend's company, I proceeded directly to the shop where the young man was working. As soon as he saw me, his eyes filled with tears. He shouted and praised God aloud. He went to the guard and said, "My good guard, my soul is happy. I cannot hold it. Just let me speak to my fellow-prisoners. I would make them see how my soul is; and they would soon get so too." The guard understood him, for he had himself recently experienced the same blessing.

Toward evening a prisoner, whose term is about expired, called on me to hold some conversation about his future course. He has recently made a profession of religion. He said he wished, on getting his liberty, to join some Christian Church, that they might watch over him and take care of him. As he did not wish to practice any deception, he desired me to write him a recommendation, stating that he had been a prisoner, his crime, his behavior in prison, his conversation, and all other things essential to his real character, so that his reception into society again would be on grounds of mutual understanding. This was very honest and honorable in the man. He is now, whatever he was once, a sincere and good man. I gave him such a recommendation as he wanted; and I am almost willing to go his surety that he will live with propriety for the future.

Saturday, June 20. Last night the prisoner taken to Cincinnati, to aid in detecting the Xenia murderers, was returned to the prison. He was of no service to the state in the trial; and it is now believed that his being called for was only a pretense of his friends, that he might have an opportunity of making his escape on the journey. But it is enough to say, J. C., one of our most efficient guards,

had his eye on him. He might as well have attempted to get away from his shadow at noonday, as to give the slip to such a man as he who went with him.

The present week closes in great peace and harmony. We have not had one stroke, or blow, or punishment of any sort, to administer to a single individual! This, certainly, considering that we have no less than four hundred and seventy-six inmates, many of whom are noted scoundrels and practiced in all manner of rebellion, is worthy of observation. Much credit is due to the reforms introduced by our able warden.

CHAPTER XII.

The penitentiary a quiet place—Movements of the warden—The female convicts—An interesting call—Walk through the yard—Treat extraordinary—Great change—Prayer meeting—Lunatic asylum—Its general arrangement—Visit to the shops—Interesting interview—Prisoner for life—His story—Letter from his wife—Deathless love of woman—Colored convict—Revelation from a murderer—A Scotchman—Strange manœuvring and deception—Caution and advice to him.

After preaching at eight o'clock to the women, and at eleven to the men, under which latter sermon there was a great deal of feeling, I went to my room for prayer and meditation. I was impressed with the quiet that reigned throughout this vast establishment. There is scarcely a family mansion in all the land, containing its little group of inmates, that can boast of greater tranquility than has characterized this penitentiary, since it came under the management of Colonel Dewey. He is a living example of the power of human kindness, in getting the ascendency over the most ferocious of human beings. He is constantly devising ways by which he can bring the great law of love to bear on these degraded and wretched outcasts. I will relate one of his new movements, and the success of it.

I have before observed the great and incomparable stubbornness and depravity of the female convicts. Strange as it may sound to those who do not know how utterly woman falls, when she falls at all, my best skill has often been put to the severest test, to know how to offer even the consolations of religion to these violent and ungovernable creatures. They are passionate, headstrong, almost insolent in their language. Thinking every one their enemy, they resent, as it were spontaneously, the performance of an act of kindness. Until this day, I must here confess, I never saw them completely softened; and the way in which this result was effected should be a lesson to all rulers.

After dinner the warden and his excellent lady called on me, and wished me to take a walk with them. Certain that they were not going to break the Sabbath, but that the Colonel had probably some new scheme of benevolence to execute, I readily consented, not knowing, however, whether his ramble was to be in or out of prison. He conducted us through one hall after another, the heavily-bolted doors thundering, and clattering, and rolling open, as he approached them, till we stood at the entrance of what we call the female prison, so often mentioned in the previous pages. We entered and were seated. The warden and his gifted lady managed the conversation; and I was glad to learn how they would converse with such persons. All was admirable. The stubbornness, the violence, the jealousy of these women were soon very nearly vanquished, at least much tamed, by the soft, sweet, kind expressions of Mrs. Dewey, and the manly benevolence of her husband. At length the Colonel told them that he had come to propose to them to take with him a little recreation about the yard. They all looked surprised. Some shrunk from the proposition with indifference, believing, no doubt, that some trick was about to be practiced on them. But the Colonel, not holding such fallen beings to a strict accountability for their unworthy jealousy, persevered in his kindness, till they all consented. The great door was opened, and we went out, followed by every female then in the prison, except those confined by sickness. Going down into the spacious yard, the warden conducted them all around it, showed them the watch-house in the centre, the trees growing and blooming under the mild sun of June, the flowers opening their beauties on the sides of the graveled paths, the deer grazing and the rabbits hopping on the green parks, and every thing lovely and beautiful in that very beautiful and lovely yard. We all sat down, and breathed the free air of that bright, soft day. We arose up, and rambled

the same ground over once and once again. The warden, of course, was master of ceremonies, and acquitted himself like a noble and benevolent man, that he truly is. The poor women were really overjoyed with their privilege. Some probably, had not seen the ground for years. Not one of them had beheld a tree, or a flower, or a skipping animal, since their commitment to these gloomy halls. I watched their countenances with deep curiosity. No language can describe how they acted and appeared. They could hardly realize where they were, or what they were doing. A leaf, a plant was a greater wonder to them than a rolling world had been in their better days. Some gazed on the trees, others on the water, others on the green, soft grass; others looked upward, with perfect ecstasy, to the blue heavens above; while from every eye the tears were trickling down. But nothing affected me more than to see how fearful they were, at first, of the deer and rabbits in the park; but, on finding them all tame and gentle, they flocked around them, caught a deer by the horns, a rabbit by the leg, and caressed them with great fondness and animation. The beasts knew no difference between prisoner and keeper; and the poor convict seemed to be actually grateful to them, as if their conduct was the result of love and confidence. As we returned, through the long hall, to the door of the female prison, after this delightful, refreshing, and affecting ramble, I heard the prisoners breathe more freely; and, in spite of the contrast between their quarters and the scene through which they had just passed, they seemed to be possessed of a degree of cheerfulness. From that memorable hour a new spirit has reigned among them. They are completely subdued and softened. My work among them is much lighter, more profitable, and abundantly more acceptable. The Gospel may now find an open door to their hitherto closed hearts; and I may be able, through this signal aid rendered by our philanthropic

warden, to turn their feet, by the farther help of God, into the paths of righteousness.

Monday, June 22. I went this morning to the female prison, being anxious to know how the women might feel affected since their excursion of yesterday. I never saw them so kind, so peaceable, so tender. I was much encouraged, and held a prayer meeting with them before dinner. They all manifested a good degree of feeling. I then talked with them individually. They gave me answers to every question, even the most searching, with apparent cheerfulness.

In the afternoon I accompanied Colonel Dewey on a visit to the lunatic asylum. It is a fine, spacious building, well located, divided into apartments on a very ingenious and convenient plan, and is, in every way, worthy of the young but noble state by which it was erected. The Sabbath in this institution is observed as a day of rest and quiet. No visitors are allowed to enter the buildings and grounds; nor are they permitted to enter the halls or rooms of patients or of attendants on this day. All persons who are employed in the asylum, that are well and can be spared from their duties, are expected to attend religious service on the Sabbath. No patients, however, are permitted to attend public worship, except under the special direction of the superintendent. These arrangements are good, and they are admirably carried out.

Tuesday, June 23. Very early this morning I went into the shops to spend the day with the prisoners. I went to hear their complaints. This was my only business; and I told them so in plain words. "If you have any thing to find fault with," said I, "now speak freely; for I have devoted this day to this purpose; and, if you fear any bad consequences, I here pledge my word as a Christian minister, that I will not betray you to your disadvantage. Whatever you confide to me shall be kept inviolably." This I did after a

great deal of deliberation. I have for a long time been thinking of the lonely condition of these men, without a friend into whose ear they can pour their sorrows and complaints. The desire of having some one to whom we can unbosom our inmost feelings is an element of our nature. On it is founded the love of society; and all the forms of affection are only modifications of this love. It is for this that the child cherishes, to his latest hour, the memory of his mother, because, more than the father, she was his first confidant, and listened patiently to his young complainings. It is for this that the husband clings to his wife, and the wife to her husband, because they can exchange or share their griefs, and thus alleviate them. But the prisoner, in becoming one, has not ceased to be a human being. He has the same desire to enjoy the sympathy and confidence of a friend. It is true, it may be said that, by their past conduct, they have forfeited all claim to the enjoyment of this privilege; but, though this may be good theory as a matter of justice, I feel myself to be the minister of mercy, and if I fail in duty, it shall be on the side of compassion. It would be improper, of course, for me here to relate any thing more than the result of this day's conversation, or I should be betraying the trust confided to me. It is sufficient to say, that it was a day of great interest to the prisoners; that they opened their hearts to me with all freedom; that they told me many things never before related, probably, to any mortals. But one thing struck me very forcibly. Not a word was spoken in complaint of our present warden, or of his administration. On the contrary, every man seemed to vie with every other in loading him with heart-felt praises. I am certain that the prisoners went to their cells in better spirits, at the close of this day, than they had for years previous.

Wednesday, June 24. After breakfast I found a man at work all alone in a solitary place. Poor fellow! He is in

for life. I went to him and addressed him kindly. He became greatly agitated while I was talking with him. He wished to know if I thought God was such a being that he would or could pardon a wretch like him. Of this I gave him every assurance from the Scriptures, and showed on what terms God dispensed his pardons. He then told me the crime for which he was committed. It was for killing a boy; and I will relate his story for the sake of my juvenile readers. A group of boys saw a drunkard, carrying a gun, staggering across the fields. They pursued him, and mocked him, and pelted him. The drunkard, not knowing what he was about, drew his gun, fired upon the boys, and killed one of their number. The murderer was the man before me. He handed me a recent letter from his wife, from which I give an extract. The reader, in order to understand the feelings of that woman properly, must remember that she regards her husband as guilty, not of murder, nor of manslaughter, but of drunkenness, in which state he committed the deed unconsciously; and how many noble traits a drunkard may have, independent of his bad habit, I need not demonstrate. Low, therefore, as this man has fallen, in the estimation of society, there is one who looks with pity on his misfortunes. Though, by the laws of the state, she is legally divorced from him, his imprisonment for life annulling the marriage contract, she yet fondly remembers him, and refuses to enjoy the benefit of her privilege. Though, of all his friends, of all the world, she is the one he has most deeply injured, she, nevertheless, seems to be the only one who forgets his crimes in the recollection of his virtues. O, woman! in thy natural estate, thou art really the world's brightest angel!

"My Dear Husband,—I embrace the present opportunity of letting you know that I am still in existence, though my health is feeble. Our children are all well at present. You may have thought that I had forgotten you. No,

my husband, such a thought would wrong me. I tell you there is something in my heart, whenever your image rises to my view—and when is it absent from me?—that time, nor distance, nor misfortune, nor poverty, nor imprisonment, nor friends, nor foes, nor all the combined powers of earth can obliterate. *I love you still. I shall love you for ever.* Although our pathway has been strown with thorns, and our troubles seem to be too intolerable to be borne, yet I remember what you were once to me, and what you are yet, I am convinced, in spite of walls and manacles; and it is not in my heart, my dear husband, to reproach you with being the cause of our separation, of our poverty, of our wretchedness; for, when you committed the deed, you were unconscious of your conduct. True enough, it was a terrible misfortune; but it can never destroy or alter my undying love for you. I will draw no pictures of our past happiness. They would only heighten the misery of your present condition. My sole object in writing to you, now and always, is to encourage you to put your whole trust in God, to consecrate your whole being to his service, to resign all your cares of me and of the children into his faithful hands, and so live as to be ready to meet us in a world where we shall not be parted. I wish you to consider, too, that God sometimes has strange ways to bring out his merciful designs toward his creatures; and your present misfortune may be, in his view, the only means by which we are all to become his children, and so live together in that world which is the only one worth possessing. Though such considerations do not remove our responsibility for our errors, they are yet a consolation to us in our troubles; and I exhort you, my dear and kind husband, to make much use of such alleviations of your present evils. Let us acquiesce in God's providence, and turn his chastisements into a balm for our wounded spirits. O, my husband, live a praying life; and may the Lord enable us so to pass the remnant of our days, that we

may meet where sickness and sorrows, trials and prisons are known no more! This is a broken and incoherent letter; but it is an apt emblem of my distressed and almost distracted state of mind. Still, I am in the hands of God. He has hitherto supported me, beyond all expectation: and I shall still trust to his overruling goodness. We are not entirely destitute of comforts. We have bread and clothing; and I am trying to do my best to rear up our children for a better fate than has fallen to their afflicted parents. Fear not but I shall do the best I can for them, for *your sake* as much as for my own. Adieu! I remain, and I ever shall remain,

"Your true friend and affectionate wife, M. M."

There, reader, is the soul of a woman for you. None but a woman, on this earth, has such love as that. May God shower his blessings on that afflicted wife and mother!

The husband, with whom I tarried for a time after reading his wife's letter, is in great distress of mind. There are some noble traits in him. He is greatly pained to know whether, in my opinion, the murdered boy went to heaven or to hell. He says he wants to see him in heaven, and ask his forgiveness, if such a thing shall be possible. I exhorted him not to be troubled now about the lad; that children dying in infancy were all saved; and that his only business now was to make his own way to heaven, by repentance and faith in the great Redeemer of the world. I left him drowned in tears.

In the foundery I found a colored man, who professes to have found peace with God. He seems to be sincere and happy I exhorted him to hold fast to his profession, by prayer and watchfulness against all sin. His countenance is full of joy.

Thursday, June 25. A prisoner called on me to-day, saying that he had a great secret to unfold to me. He seemed to feel very bad. The amount of his story was,

that, soon after the Xenia murders, this man was in Cincinnati, and there met with an old comrade in crime, who, on meeting him, addressed him thus: "Well, I am in a tight place. I was with [the name was given in the flash style] when he entered the store at Xenia. My part was to keep an outside watch. He went in to steal, not with the intent to kill; but, on finding two men inside, who made resistance, he was obliged to put them to sleep, that they might make no more fuss. That fellow is yet clear. I know where he can be found." The prisoner then gave me directions. I wrote immediately to the sheriff of —— county, not, however, without the usual caution against the deceptions practiced by convicts, who, in this way, often contrive to swear themselves out of confinement. All persons who have had much to do with a penitentiary understand this matter very well, and are not very liable to be deceived; but there was something in this fellow's character and manner, which made me think it would be well enough to communicate with the sheriff of his county, in relation to the case.

Afterward I fell in with another convict, a Scotchman, who, according to his own account, must have fallen from quite a height. His story he told me thus, abating his Scotch dialect, which I will not quote: "I am the son of a Scotch minister, whose father was a man of princely fortune. I am the oldest child. My father is getting now in years; and I am the heir, through him, of my grandfather's vast estate. My grandfather is tottering on the borders of the grave, and must soon leave all his wealth, first to my father, and then to me; and a large part of it, I am told, will come to me directly by the old man's will. I have here a letter to my father. I have told him that I am well and doing well, so he may not cut me off from the inheritance. I beg of you, as a favor, to take it and put it in the post-office." This Scotchman is a very shrewd

fellow; and this letter I regarded as some new trick of his; but his ambition had "o'erleaped itself," in one thing. He had confessed that the letter contained a falsehood; and I therefore had a ready apology for declining to have any thing to do with it. His confession gave me, also, a good text from which to preach him a pointed, faithful, practical lesson against deception. Knowing his real history very well, I was able to make a very direct application of my sermon to his own case. "Your besetting sin," said I, "is the very one that, by your own account, characterizes this letter. It was the sin of deception, in one of its aggravated forms, that brought you to this prison. You are now practicing it on your own father. Beware, sir, of what you are doing. Go to your cell, or to work, and ask God's forgiveness for what you have done; and promise him that, by his help, you will do so no more for ever." The man went away with his letter, and never troubled me in this style afterward; and though the reader may regard the reproof as rather severe, he must remember that it will not do, for your own usefulness, to let the prisoners find out that they can overreach you. This would be an end to all honesty and frankness on their part, and to all authority and government on ours.

CHAPTER XIII.

A breath of country air—Repinings—A sermon—"God is love"—My birthday—An unfortunate youth—Bigamy—St. Simon and Fourier, and their co-laborers—An important fact—Restitution—Four conversions—A new feature—Prayers at the table—Conversion of a youth—The work of skepticism—Religious experience—Words of admonition—Writing letters—Departure of convicts—Suffering of the innocent—Juries.

This week begins with encouraging prospects. An interval of two weeks, however, has occured between the close of the last and the opening of this chapter. This interval was spent at home, in my family and among my friends, in the town of Eaton. The constant sight of so much degradation was exchanged, for a little time, for more cheering objects; but, after all, my heart is with my charge, and I return to it with renewed vigor.

During my recent private conversation with the prisoners, wherein I had exhorted them to utter to me their complaints, several had indulged in repinings at the hand of Providence for giving them existence in such a world of sin and woe—for permitting them to live till they fell into such calamities—for not taking them in their infancy, when all would have been well with them. In view of these repinings, I took for my text, this day, "*God is love*," and gave them the most clear and convincing exhibition and proof of God's unbounded love to sinners in my power to give. The general scope of my remarks can be gathered from the following brief: "*The love of God is essential to this character, being original, unsuggested, instinctive, voluntary, free, and boundless, the exhibition of which is made under several forms.*

"I. In creation, where every thing is made for happiness.

"1. Inanimate objects.

"2. Animate objects.

"3. The relations of these objects to each other.

"II. In divine Providence, as respects,

"1. Nations,

"2. Individuals,

"3. Particularly those relying on its guidance.

"III. In the plan of redemption.

"1. In still loving us after we had sinned and fallen.

"2. In sending a Savior, to make a way of restoration possible.

"3. In assisting us to take hold of offered mercy, when we had lost our natural power of doing so.

"4. In following us, through life, in spite of all our sinful opposition, to offer us salvation, while there is a single chance of our recovery." Many tears fell on this occasion.

Monday, July 13. This day I attended the laying of the corner-stone of a new Methodist Episcopal church in this city. It was an interesting occasion.

Tuesday, July 14. This, reader, is my birthday. This is my thirty-eighth year as a traveling minister of the Church to which I belong. Within that time I have seen much, suffered much, enjoyed much, labored much, and lost nothing but a portion of that undue attachment to the present life which clings to all men, in spite of every effort. I look back with regret upon my long labors, because I cannot see more that has been accomplished through my instrumentality. I feel like consecrating myself, more than ever, to God's service. I now begin my sixty-sixth year. The work of religion seems to be beginning, and spreading, gradually, through my important charge. May the God of Israel send us a shower of glory and of triumph before the next year closes!

A man was committed to-day for two years. His crime is bigamy. He is the son of pious parents; says he was once baptized, and in communion with a Christian Church, and a happy man. He was married young; but his wife proved inconstant, and he left her. After he had been

absent nine years, she applied for a divorce, and he supposed that she had obtained it. He, consequently, married the second time, as he thought he had a right to; but he was prosecuted, tried, and sentenced, as he thinks, most unjustly. Let me here say, that there are *many* convicts here for bigamy; that it is becoming a common crime throughout the country; that the law of marriage is becoming, every day, less sacred in the eyes of our countrymen; and that something must be done to arrest the progress of this evil, or, in time, no family in the land will be out of danger. I attribute much of this state of things to the unscriptural and wicked notions on this subject, propagated by men calling themselves Socialists, or reformers. St. Simon and Fourier, a couple of crazy Frenchmen, began this crusade against marriage. Their disciples, Considerant, and Louis Blanc, and others of equal infamy, have kept up the vitality of their doctrines in France, while a few renegades from Christianity, such as Robert Owen, Robert Dale Owen, George Ripley, and many more of the same clique, have contaminated the popular mind of this country. Our sister states of Illinois and Indiana, at Economy and at New Harmony, have helped forward the contamination. It is now said, that some French philosophers have undertaken to make a settlement in Texas, on the no-marriage principle. This movement, reader, must be stopped; the institution of marriage must be maintained; the Bible, which set up the institution, must be acknowledged and obeyed in social matters, or society will plunge itself to the lowest depths of ruin.

In a conversation with a prisoner to-day I obtained possession of a fact which illustrates an important principle. This man had been seeking religion, but had, apparently, made no progress. His heart had been very heavy, but the burden was growing no lighter. As I was talking with him, and pressing his duty upon him with much energy of

expression, his heart seemed to break. The tears fell from his eyes freely. "Now," said the man, "I may as well confess the whole of my difficulty. I can keep it no longer. I have confidence in you that you are my friend, and that you will use what I tell you only for my good." I assured him that I would do him no injury; but if he had any secret, which, if told me, I could not in conscience keep, he might as well spare himself. "No," said he, "it is nothing that will trouble *your* conscience, but it troubles *mine;* and I am at last brought to a certainty that I can never obtain the forgiveness of my sins, until I undo what I have done. I have in my possession a gold watch, chain, and seal, worth one hundred and fifty dollars, which I took from a man residing on the Ohio river, but his name I have utterly forgotten. These are all the articles of property now left to me of all my unholy gains; and these I cannot keep, if I value the salvation of my never-dying soul." I asked him where they were to be found: He told me; and I then assured him that I would take immediate steps to learn the name of the rightful owner, and to restore to him the property. "Now I feel better," said the prisoner, bringing a long sigh, that seemed to relieve his heart. "Well, then," said I, "as you have now done your duty in this particular, so you must do in every other particular, so far as you have the power, making confession and restitution, and God will have mercy on your soul." "This is all," the man replied, "that now remains. There is nothing else that I can restore; but I confess to you, before God, that I have been a great sinner, and am sorry for it all." "If that be the case," said I, "then you are free to seek the pardon of your sins; but let me tell you that you have misplaced things strangely in your confession. Instead of confessing to me before God, which is a Catholic error, you should confess to God before me, if you please, or without me in your secret cell; and God will hear your confession, listen

to your penitent cries, answer your prayers, and save your soul. I can do nothing for you but to tell you what to do. I am not the physician. I have not the medicine, the balm, to heal your wounded soul; but I point you to Christ, who is the great Physician, who has the balm of life, and who will heal you, and make you entirely sound." With such exhortations I dismissed him; and he went away with a lighter heart than he had had for many a day. The example of this man establishes the important fact, that *restitution* is a large element in true repentance, and that forgiveness of sin is not to be looked for without it. Let the reader remember this when he himself shall call for mercy at the hands of his merciful and forgiving God.

I found to-day four new cases of clear conversion. The reader, it is true, may have little confidence in these professions of the prisoners; but I think my long experience in the ministry, in revivals of religion, and among prisoners themselves, has furnished me against deceptions of this sort. Whether a man be truly converted and born again is known only to himself and God; but whether he practices deception, or is only himself deceived, I think I know how to tell without the probability of much mistake. It is the business, the art, the profession of a minister to know how to judge of such things; and I think my thirty-eight years of close observation of men, in civilized and in savage life, of life under nearly all its forms, has given me a right to speak with some little confidence in matters of this kind. I therefore say, that the four or five persons, here reported as having recently experienced religion in this prison, bear all the marks of a thorough and genuine experience of the work of God upon their hearts.

Wednesday, July 15. To-day, after much counsel with the warden and other officers of the prison, we introduced a new religious privilege. It has ever been the custom here for the convicts to assemble at the table, and, at a

given signal, to take their food without making any outward, and perhaps with as little inward exhibition of thankfulness to God for his bounties toward them. We this morning undertook a new and more Christian mode of sitting around our tables. After the convicts were all seated, the deputy warden, Captain Bradford, gave two chimes of the bell; at which the prisoners took off their caps. I then knelt down and prayed. We lifted our voice in behalf of the prisoners, of their absent wives and children, of their former friends and neighbors, of those who had been injured by the crimes of those then there, of the many out of prison still on the road that brought these to their present ruin, of that society of which we had all once been members, and of all the great world around us. We supplicated God to send forth among the people of the world a better spirit—to shed the light of religion on all nations—to make his true Church mighty in the reformation of the nations—to stay the hand of crime, of violence, of bloodshed in all communities; and especially to give these prisoners the spirit of repentance, and power to lay hold on Christ their only hope and salvation. It was a deeply-solemn time. The stillness of a grave-yard reigned throughout the hall. As we arose from our knees, at the chime of the deputy's bell, the poor fellows wiped their eyes with the sleeves of their coats; and commenced eating at another signal. The deputy and warden told me, at the close of that day's labor, that never, since they had been here, had there been so much sobriety and good behavior among the prisoners. Yes, God is stronger than man; and the worst of mankind, when they will scorn to bow before a fellow-being, will willingly bend their knees and their stubborn hearts to him.

Thursday, July 16. This afternoon I received a note from one of the guards, informing me that one of the prisoners wished to see me. The billet went on to say,

that the man must be under conviction for his sins, as he gave every evidence of the fact, and that an immediate visit would be desirable. I requested the guard, by return of note, to send the young man to me, as I wished to see him privately. I was sitting at the time in the bell-house. As soon as the young man entered the door, he sprang toward me, threw his arms around my neck, and cried aloud, "God is love!"

"Yes," said I, pressing the lad in my arms, "God *is* love;" and we praised the Holy One with fervor, while the tears rolled down his cheeks profusely.

When the first raptures of the meeting were over, we fell into a delightful conversation; whereupon the young man gave me the following narrative of his history: "For several years I have been an infidel, having imbibed such notions from the first of my recollection. In early youth my friends and associates were all skeptical. Their influence had done the work rapidly, often condensing the labor and results of years into as many months; so that, before I was eighteen years of age, I was a confirmed, wicked, hardened skeptic. In this condition of mind I remained until after my commitment to this prison, and even till last Sabbath. Ever since I have been here, I have determined to hear as little of the Gospel as possible, not believing a word of it. The impressions of my youth had been greatly confirmed against the Bible by the influence of the prevalent doctrines of Calvinism. If God had made, as that book was said to teach, a certain portion of the human race for endless misery, and a certain other portion for eternal happiness, without respect to their characters or conduct, I wanted to have no belief in him. His nature seemed tyrannical and hateful to me. So it has seemed for years; for I have never had instruction in any other view of God's character. Last Sabbath you took the text, 'God is love,' which, by its novelty, attracted my attention. For the first time since I

have been in prison, I listened to the sermon carefully. When you closed, as you will remember, you remarked that you feared we would forget the sermon; but if we did, you hoped by all means we would not forget the text. Your suggestion that, in order to retain it, we would do well to write it down in our cells, struck me forcibly. As soon as I reached my cell I took a piece of chalk, and wrote it down—*God is love*—in large letters, on the iron bar that crosses my cell-door. I then laid down, and meditated on what you had taught us, till I fell asleep. When I awoke, the first thing I saw were the large characters in which I had written down your text—*God is love.* The next morning, as I went to work, this same sentence was constantly before my eyes. All that day I reflected on God's goodness toward me—on my transgressions against him—on the present and future consequences, according to observation and the teachings of the Bible, of a bad life. My sins all rose up, like armed men, before me. A thick cloud settled over my head. Still, in my darkest and most dreadful hour, a voice would ring in my ear, '*God is love.*' Last night I went to bed early, but not to sleep; for all slumber had gone from me. I could do nothing but roll and toss, from side to side, in deep agony. When the bugle sounded, in the morning, I was still in deep pain of mind. It seemed as if it would be impossible for me to live through another day, with such feelings. 'Now, Lord,' said I; 'why not now? Why shall I perish? O, give me power to live!' By this time the bugle had ceased, and I must be up and ready. Opening my eyes—for I had hitherto closed them upon the world, that I might the better open them on God—I saw the large letters on the iron bar again—*God is love.* 'O God,' said I, with a prodigious struggle of soul, 'help me to believe that God is love—that he loves me—that he saves me!' In an instant, but how I cannot tell, my soul was filled with joy. The burden was gone.

The pain was gone. The tears were gone. Every thing terrible, or dark, or disagreeable, was gone. All was gone, except an overpowering consciousness of the truth that *God is love*, and that I was the humble object of that love My joy was too great. I leaped up, and praised God with my whole heart. O, father Finley, had I a thousand tongues, I should wish to employ them all in praising God, in convincing my fellow-beings, or my fellow-prisoners, that *God is love!*"

This is the substance of the young man's account. From what I know of him, but which I cannot detail to the reader, I have all confidence to believe, that this is a genuine example of the work of God. The remainder of our interview was, therefore, spent in conversation relating to his perseverance and growth in grace. I addressed him, on this subject, with great solemnity and kindness, nearly in the following words: "Young man, you now trust that you are born again—that you are a new creature—that God has pardoned your sins, and adopted you as a member of his glorious family. No words can tell the honor, the benefit he has conferred upon you. You are now a part of his very household. You will never be turned away from him, so long as you remain true to him. Should you, however, betray him, he will be bound, as a wise governor of his family, to repel you from his presence. Give your heart to him freely. Consecrate this day, if you have not done it already, all the powers of your soul and body to his service, for the present and for ever. You will be tempted and tried, but you will never be abandoned by God, until you abandon him. Should you, at any future time, do any thing wrong, or think that you have, do not cast away your confidence in that truth, 'God is love,' which seems to have been such a blessing to you; and remember another passage which has restored comfort to many a poor, fallen, professing Christian: 'If any man sin, we have an advocate

with the Father, even Jesus Christ the righteous;' and 'if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to *cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*' Still, you ought to make your calculations and resolves, by God's help, not to sin at all, not to fall, but to love and serve God, with all your ransomed powers, till death and through eternity. Form this resolution now, while you are warm and fresh in the work of God, and it will soon form itself into a habit, not to be easily overcome."

When I had finished, the young man seemed to be deeply thankful for my advice; and he left me with his face beaming with happiness, and with eyes lit up with an unearthly joy. He is certainly a converted man.

Friday, July 17. This day was spent in visiting, and in writing letters. I have never kept up a very extensive correspondence, though it gives me great satisfaction to hold this species of conversation with dear and distant friends. What I do, in this respect, I have to do by setting apart a day, every now and then, particularly to it.

Saturday, July 18. Three prisoners leave us to-day. Two of them have served out their time. The other has obtained a pardon. The latter has been a steady, upright, honest, industrious, and useful man in prison. He is a good mechanic, and has been faithful in his business; but I fear his heart is not changed.

Toward evening I conversed with W. He is a good man. His life shows it. He was sent here on a charge of arson; but he says he is innocent; that some one else did the deed; and that it was wrongfully sworn on him. There is much reason, more than I can now give, to think that his asseverations of innocence are true. In my heart I believe him to be a good and an injured man. Juries should take warning, from this example, to be careful of what they do. It is better for ten guilty ones to escape, than for one just man to be punished.

CHAPTER XIV.

Breakfast table—Sermon—Confidential talk—Marriage—Dialogue on the subject—Fair logic—Two cases of discipline—Numerous visitors—A tour of collecting books—What do prisoners want?—Long commitments impolitic—An appeal to the public—Writing a sermon—Grievous complaint from a prisoner—Gross injustice of the sentencing court—Four years' confinement for passing thirty cents counterfeit money—Letter to England—A soundly-converted and happy man—Retribution—Letter from a brother to his sister—Beastly feelings—Letter from a son to his mother—Another letter from a brother to his sister.

Early on the morning of this Sabbath (July 19) I met the prisoners in the breakfasting room, and explained to them the sixty-third Psalm; after which we spent a short season in social prayer. At eight o'clock I addressed the females in their department, and at eleven the men. On returning from the chapel I was accosted by a prisoner, who said he had a singular piece of business to lay before me. "But," said the man, "as you are the prisoners' friend in all matters, I can speak of it with more confidence to you than I could to any body else.'

"Well, what is it?" said I.

"It is about marriage," replied the man.

"Marriage!"

"Yes; for you know my time is nearly out, and I am soon to be released. I wish to begin life anew, and be a better man; and, as many of my sins began in my being unmarried, I wish to take away this difficulty in the outset. I am satisfied, also, that a married man is not only more moral, and industrious, and steady, but a much happier man than the unmarried. I have, therefore, resolved on getting married, as soon as I can form a suitable connection."

"Well, if you have resolved on it, what do you want with me?"

"Nothing else than to help me to a suitable wife."

"What sort of a woman do you think would be suitable for you?"

"One of my own rank and condition."

"What, a prisoner?"

"Yes."

"Do you wish to marry one of the convict women?"

"Yes."

"For what reason?"

"So that we shall always be on equal terms; she not being able to reproach me, and I not having occasion to fear reproaches, or envy her better cast of fortune."

"But if you wish to be a better man, do you do well in seeking a companion whose former life has not been good?"

"Yes."

"How do you make that appear?"

"God, you know, has converted my soul. No power of earth or hell can pluck me out of his hand. I feel strong in the power of his might. If I marry a convict, the first business of our married life will be, if she is not a Christian, to labor jointly and exclusively for her conversion, till the work is done. Nothing shall be undertaken or thought of, till this is accomplished. Then we can begin life together as though we had never sinned. We shall have the seal of God's pardon in the approving smiles of his presence; and when the better part of the world—the only part whose favor is worth having—sees that we have his forgiveness, they, too, will be likely to forgive us. With the friendship of God and of good men, we cannot be otherwise than happy. I shall be grateful to God for giving me a converted wife; my wife will be grateful to him for giving her such a helper as I hope to be to her; and we shall both give thanks to each other for each other's love, and aid, and confidence."

"Is that your scheme for your future conduct?"

"I can form no other at all likely to secure my happiness here or hereafter."

"But who is the woman?"

The prisoner here gave me her name.

"But she has some time yet to stay."

"Yes, but I shall exert myself to get her liberated; and, in this, I beg you to render me such advice and assistance as you think consistent with your duty."

"Is that what you want of me?"

"It is."

"Well," said I to the poor fellow, "I will reflect on the subject till to-morrow, and then tell you what I think I can do for you."

This, reader, is a strange case. I have no doubt of the man's sincerity. His plan of restoring himself to society and to himself, is worthy of a philosopher and a Christian. Perhaps there is scarcely another example of it on record. I shall watch the progress of his future life with unmeasured interest.

July 20. To-day the warden tells me that two cases of breach of discipline have occurred for a week; and these were the slightest of offenses. One was speaking; the other was looking. The truths of the Gospel, so constantly ringing in their ears and so often melting their hearts, can but make them more obedient; and the prayers continually going up in their behalf, and in their hearing, every morning, must make a powerful and salutary impression. This morning, for example, we had a most precious season of prayer at the breakfast table. As the supplications were going up to God for blessings on the poor convicts, who were sitting decently about the tables, the stillness of a grave-yard reigned among them; but when their wives and children were mentioned, and God was besought to take care of them in the absence of their natural protectors, many sighs and sobs were heard, and the big tears rolled

down their pallid faces. Thus, the better feelings of the heart are continually appealed to in these devotions; and every exercise of them not only gives them strength, but weakens the sway of those passions by which these men have been so ruined.

We have had many visitors to-day; and I had opportunity of conversing with several gentlemen and ladies of distinction on the subject of prison discipline. I am glad to find that right notions are beginning to prevail on this subject; that it is no longer thought necessary to treat a convict as if he were a beast from the forest; that we may regard them as human beings, only somewhat more fallen than all others, whom we are to win back by the same agency by which God proposes to save a world of sinners.

In the afternoon I made a few visits in the city for the purpose of collecting books for the prisoners' library. My success was better than I had expected. We have now quite a fair collection of books; but many more, and books of a higher order than we now have, are much needed. Prisoners need the best of books. To form their minds to reading and study, the great master-pieces of human genius should be given them for perusal. Dull works will only weary and disgust them. Such works as Herodotus and Livy translated, the poems of Homer and the Greek and Latin poets generally, in the dress given them by such geniuses as Pope and Dryden, and the productions of the great moderns, from Petrarch to Washington Irving, including the histories of Prescott and the best of English writers, should be laid upon their shelves for daily use. Works of a religious character, too, should be of the same high order. No fifth-rate things should be given them. Such men as Fenelon, Baxter, Bunyan, Butler, Wesley, and Fletcher, should be their familiar authors. Works for the head and works for the heart should be commingled. Science, philosophy, literature, religion, general intelligence,

should be recommended to them by books written by the masters of composition. But of such productions there is yet a great lack in our prisoners' collection. We beseech the public to think of us, in this respect, when they find such works lying unread upon their tables.

July 21. I am more and more satisfied, that there is great inequality and great injustice practiced, in the terms for which convicts are committed. We have men sent here for fifteen years, merely because five or ten dollars of counterfeit money were found, under suspicious circumstances, upon their persons. There are others here for manslaughter, whose criminality is much greater, but whose terms are very much shorter. These long commitments, too, are most unwise, in my opinion. They discourage the poor prisoner. He sees the best of his life is to be wasted in prison; and when he gets out, he has nothing before him, a man broken in heart and in constitution, but his old practices to keep him from starvation. He goes out, also, with a feeling of revenge for the cruelty exercised by the state against him. The utmost care should be taken against producing such consequences.

July 22. This day I sent an appeal, through the columns of the Western Christian Advocate, to the people of Ohio for books for our prison library. I can never let this subject rest till we have a larger supply of good books. Think, reader, for one moment, of the intellectual and social condition of these men. They work all day. They work in silence. They are not allowed even to look upon a stranger, nor upon each other, except by special permission. They are cut off from all, or nearly all, associations with the outward world. Their very friends do not often write them; and this familiar correspondence is to them almost the only source of knowledge of the outward world. Not a word must pass their lips, except to an officer, or to a fellow-prisoner in the presence of an officer. See, then, how they

are buried up in this dungeon of a prison! But, though buried they are not dead. They are living men. They are possessed of all the faculties of living, intellectual, moral, social beings. Their yearnings for society, for information, for contact with the mind of their fellow-man, is ten times stronger than it ever was before. Nothing, however, can be safely done for them, which has not been done, except the furnishing of them with books. It would not do to relax the discipline of the institution in relation to conversation and other things. But from books there is no danger. They can be read with impunity, with profit, and with pleasure. Men, who were not readers out of prison, are great readers here. It is their only food to read. When the habit of reading is once formed, they not only derive the highest satisfaction from their books, but the withdrawal of them is the severest punishment which the institution can inflict. When I judge these reading prisoners by myself, I pity them from the bottom of my heart. Give me books enough and I could endure almost any punishment. Take them from me, and a palace would be gloomier than a prison. Nothing on earth would buy from me my love of reading. The wealth of California, the mines of Potosi, could not purchase it. How dear, then, must books be to those who, unlike myself, have no other intellectual and social resource! But I find it impossible to give due expression to the deep feelings weighing on my heart in relation to this subject. Revolve it, reader, till you see and feel it as you should.

July 23. I have spent this day in writing a sermon for the Wesleyan University of Ohio; but I am too old, too little practiced with the pen, too much of a pioneer in my habits, to do such work. As it is now completed, I send it out with my blessing, and with a prayer to God that it may not be altogether useless in the world.

July 24. Some tales of woe were related to me to-day;

after which I visited a man who said his punishment was too severe.

"What do you say?" said I.

"My punishment is too much."

"That depends on the character of your crime, and the length of your commitment. What have you to say respecting these?"

"The facts," said the man, "are the following, which are on record, and you can read them for yourself. A neighbor of mine set up a grocery near where I lived. He was a bad man—bad, because he was always determined to get rich, by fair means or foul. He sold whisky, and tried every art to ensnare us into the habits of drinking. Among others, I at length gave way, and became a frequent visitor at his shop. At last I became a drunkard. In a drunken frolic I passed three counterfeit dimes, and was prosecuted by another drinking neighbor, whom the grocery-keeper had also made a drunkard. I was tried and condemned to four years' imprisonment, though this was the first and only offense of the kind I ever committed in my life. Here I am now to spend three years more for having passed thirty cents of bad money, while so drunk that I should not have known a guinea from a dime. My sin, it seems to me, was in getting drunk, and not in passing the base money; but it is not customary to send men to prison for getting intoxicated. That is my story, Mr. Finley. Do you think my punishment is just?"

"Whether just or unjust," I replied, "your imprisonment will be a blessing to you, if it does nothing else than to make you a sober man."

"That may be so."

"Besides, had you remained out in the world, who knows that you would not to-day have been in a drunkard's grave, and in a drunkard's hell?"

"True enough!"

"May not this misfortune, then," said I, "be a mercy in disguise?"

"Very likely; but I never saw it so before."

"Well, we do not always see what is best for us. God does; and he often permits an evil out of which he intends to bring a good. Still, I do not justify the court that sentenced you. On that subject I am not informed farther than by what you have just now said. Of course I could form no wise opinion till I had heard the other side. If you have given the facts in the case correctly and fully, I am free, nevertheless, to say, that I think your punishment is too severe; but you must not now think of this. The court, the county, has no ill-will toward you. I will mention you to the warden; and, if you have really been misused, there is mercy in our good governor. But your best way is to think how you may best employ your time here in making of yourself a better man."

With many similar exhortations I left this fellow. I have since satisfied myself that he has given me, substantially, the truth. How strange it will sound to all reasonable men! A man sent to the penitentiary for four years for passing thirty cents of counterfeit money, in a drunken frolic, while we have here, next cell to him, another sent here for one year for killing one of his comrades in a row! But the man who sold the whisky is the great sinner, after all. He was the procuring cause of the crime for which this man suffers. The same is true of nine-tenths of all the crimes committed in the country; and yet the selling of ardent spirits is protected by law! Men are actually licensed by the state to sell a poison which, in its certain operations, is known to instigate those who take it to steal, rob, murder, and plunge themselves and the community around them into the deepest woe! Were this thing merely stated by a public enemy, by some inhabitant of another sphere, and not practiced every day, mankind would not believe in the possibility

of such a thing. It sounds like a foul libel on the world But it is all too true! The state of Ohio, in the light of the nineteenth century, in part lives upon the price of blood!

July 25. This morning a letter was handed me by a prisoner, which he had written to his parents and friends in England. As it sketches the troubles of many foreigners in their first attempts to settle and live in this country, particularly if their habits are not good, I give a large extract from it for the good of those whom it may concern:

"*Penitentiary of Ohio, July* 24, 1846.

"My Dear Parents,—You will be overwhelmed, I know, to receive a letter from me dated from such a place. But it is better, I think, if you hear from me at all, to hear the truth. I am compelled, then, to say, grievous as it is to me to say it, that I am now a state prisoner in the penitentiary of Ohio, in the United States! I am here justly. I have committed a crime against the laws of God and of this good country. I am now serving out the sentence of four years' imprisonment at hard labor. Let not the knowledge of my evil situation too deeply afflict you. True, you reared not your son for such an end as this. I feel it all—all that you could say—ay, too much; but, considering my situation, I am comfortable and happy—far happier than ever before since I left your parental roof. God has been merciful in bringing me here. Nay, I bless God that I am here! Otherwise, I might this day have been shut up in black despair, where I should now be, had I my just deserts. This, I say, is a happier place to me than I have found for years; for, when I was at liberty, I was plunging myself into constant wickedness, misery, and trouble. You well know, that, when at home, I was ever complaining of your discipline and restraints. I left home to get away from them. I have had enough of my own ways. On reaching New York from Liverpool, in the month of

January, 1841, I found myself a stranger in a strange land, without a guinea or a friend. Having no mode of supporting myself, I enlisted into the American army, and was sent to Florida to fight the Indians. There I had full vent for all my evil passions. I went to such lengths that it is a wonder God did not cut me off for ever. I remained with the army two years, and was then dismissed for bad conduct. Think, then, of a man too bad to be in an army, and you will see to what a depth of wretchedness I had fallen! I had become a perfect drunkard, and would do any thing for rum. I had spent my wages, pawned my clothes, and every thing, for drink. I was a vagabond on the earth. I went to the state of Alabama, one of the southern states, lying on the Gulf of Mexico, where I worked a few days, and obtained money enough to carry me to New Orleans. At New Orleans I worked long enough to get the money to pay for a deck passage on a steamer bound for Cincinnati. On reaching Cincinnati I was entirely destitute of money, and nearly so of clothes. Falling in with bad company, and being in great want, I was induced to join a band of night robbers. I was caught, and sentenced to this prison for four years. And now I repeat to you, my dear parents, that it is a great mercy that I am here. I feel bound evermore to thank God for having shut me up where I can no longer get the means of intoxication. I have tasted of no liquor for twenty months. I feel that I am once more a temperate man. My heart is set against drinking, as I see all my sorrows have come from the poisoned cup. I trust in God for ability to keep my temperance vows. But I have to tell you of a higher trust; namely, that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned my sins. Now, my dear parents, I ask you to pray for me, that I may be enabled to serve God the remainder of my life. I have many comforts in this prison; and, though it is a place of misery to most, and a place of infamy to all, to me it

affords happiness, strange as it may seem to you. What others look on as inconveniences, I have been led to regard as blessings. Here I live at night in my little cell, shut out from all temptations to sin against God, with an assortment of good books upon my shelf. The daytime is spent in work; but this is no damage to any man. We have a fine Sabbath school, where we are all permitted, and even encouraged, to attend. We have public preaching every Sabbath from our chaplain, who is a venerable and good man, whose words are like manna to us all. The throne of grace is addressed in our behalf every morning at the breakfast table. For this blessing I am greatly thankful, for it has such a soothing and elevating effect upon us all through the day. O, my parents, I thank God, above all other things, that I have found a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. You will not think me crazy, or that I have followed a cunningly-devised fable. No, it is a blessed reality; and I will now tell you, in a few words, how I obtained the prize of prizes. On Sabbath, the 12th of June, I went to church as usual; and our reverend and faithful chaplain took for his text 1 John iv, 8, '*God is love.*' The sermon had no great effect on me until about the close of it, when the preacher said that the knowledge of this great fundamental truth was of so much importance that it never should be forgotten. 'Lest you should forget it,' said he, 'you ought to write it on the door of your cells.' 'If that is the case,' said I to myself, 'it is of more importance than I had supposed;' and I therefore concluded to follow his suggestion. In large letters I scrawled on the cross-bar of my cell-door—GOD IS LOVE; and I thank God I did; for it has been a great blessing to my soul. I thought but little about it till the next Tuesday morning, when, on awaking, the first thing that met my eyes was this sentence—*God is love.* It made a strangely-powerful appeal to my heart. I seemed to hear, also, the words, 'Behold, I stand

at the door and knock.' I arose from my bed in great confusion of thought, for something seemed to overwhelm me. My sins all rushed to my mind at once. I saw before me every thing I ever did in my life. For the first time for years I fell on my knees and cried to God for mercy. I pleaded with Christ for pardon. I was in the deepest distress of mind until Thursday night. Then, at about two o'clock, while wrestling in prayer, I felt something wonderful in my mind. I was filled with a flood of peace! That is the best description I can give of it. I could hardly credit myself. It seemed as if it could not be *me*, who had such feelings. Indeed, I was nearly beside myself with joy. I shouted, and wept, and praised God all alone, in the middle of the night. I tried to feel bad again for my sins, but could not, my heart was so filled with the streams of love. The next day I was permitted to see our venerable chaplain. O, it was a joyful meeting! He received me as the good father did his prodigal son. He told me that, without doubt, God had pardoned my sins, and that the joy and peace I felt were, in part, the evidence of my acceptance with God. How my heart leaped when I heard this from his aged and experienced lips! I could not refrain from praising God with a loud voice, and father Finley mingled his voice with mine. Since that joyful day I have had constant communion and fellowship with God. O, my dear parents, this is a blessed way to live! This prison is no more filled with gloom; and the world looks beautiful in this new light, streaming upon me from the other world! Have no more anxiety about me. God is now my friend; he is my defense; and nothing can harm me so long as I am so unreservedly in his hands. * * *

"Remember me in your morning and evening prayers.

"Your once undutiful but now happy son,

"J. D."

This, reader, is a triumphant case. Of course, I cannot

set down all the facts, which have convinced me, beyond a doubt, of the man's sincerity and of the genuineness of the work of grace wrought in his heart. But take my word for it, he is a changed, converted, happy man, if ever there was one in this world. All that he writes respecting his experience here in prison is true; and there is no reason to doubt the first part of his interesting account.

I will now present the reader with an extract from a letter written by a convict to his own sister in relation to his father. I give it, horrible as it is, to show parents their responsibility. This father had brought up this son to all manner of wickedness; had encouraged him in his course of crime; had formed with him a kind of partnership in the infernal business of iniquity. Now see how he is repaid! See what becomes of filial love, of the softest and tenderest affections of the human heart, when educated in the school of vice. Parents, take warning as you peruse these burning lines!

"*Ohio Penitentiary, June*, 1846.

"My Sister,—You ask me what I have to say about myself. I have this to say, that my father is deeper in the mud than I am in the mire. And yet the scoundrel seems entirely to have forgotten me! Yes, though he promised me I should not stay here six months. He offered me money to submit peaceably to my fate. Now, then, I tell you—I most solemnly swear, I am innocent of the crime, *though I know who the guilty one is.* But I will not keep silence any longer. I tell you plainly, had I turned state's evidence against my father, I should have seen him hung for the offense, as he deserved to be! I never knew a word of it till it was all over; and if I were now at liberty, I would take no rest, day nor night, until he was brought to justice, although he *is* my father! The reasons he assigned for killing mother were, first, that, when he married her, he supposed she was a widow,

whereas it appeared afterward that she had another husband living; secondly, that he suspected her of having unlawful intercourse with another man—and, if it is all true, she ought to have been killed! But I solemnly declare I did not do it, nor did I know a word of it, till the deed was done! * * *

"S. L."

Reader, how much in advance of dumb beasts is such a family? And yet, they all possessed the same faculties possessed by every other human being, and were as capable, at first, of being brought to a high state of refinement, morality, and religion. But they were reared under influences calculated to imbrute them at every step. Their education made them what they are. O how important, then, that our families be properly educated from their earliest youth!

For the sake of a contrast to this letter, I will here give another of a different kind, addressed by a young man to his mother:

"*Prison*, 1846.

"My Dear Mother,—Can you pardon the arrogance of one, who has so deeply disgraced himself and afflicted you, if he takes his pen in hand to write something for your perusal? I feel my disgrace and deplorable condition; and I could not have the heart to write these lines to any one but a mother. No language can express my anguish. I feel that I am justly, in the true sense of the terms, fatherless, and motherless, and friendless, my crimes having cut me off from the sympathies of all whose love I ever shared. My cup of sorrow is constantly running over. It is impossible for me to express the justice by which I am left without a comfort or a friend. None has ever been more deeply plunged into the vortex of sin and degradation. I seem to be out of humanity's reach. I must travel my dark journey alone—alone to the grave. No words can paint the horror and complexity of my fears. My

very doubts wear the face of horrors. I should be perfectly overwhelmed, were it not for some fair beams of hope which dart across the tremendous gloom. O mother, tongue cannot express, and may you never know, the anguish of one suspended between the extremest wretchedness of this life and the bottomless pit of eternal woe! O horror! My soul shudders at the thought! O God, how have I spent my life! What enchantment, what syren voice, has led me! In what delusion have my days been spent! What have I been doing in this glorious world of thine! Thy sun and thy stars have lent their beams to light my footsteps to eternal ruin! How have I been treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath! O my mother—fit to be invoked next after God—my mind is wrecked and constantly drifted into this channel of foreboding, so that I find no rest for my aching heart and weary head! In all probability, as I am here for life, I must go down to the most lothsome and dishonorable of all graves—that of a convict! I go there, too, with this torturing reflection, that I have lived only to ruin myself, and to wound, disgrace, and afflict my dearest friends. I look forward a few years and see the finger of scorn pointed at my weeping sister! I see my aged—O my angel of a mother, sinking down under a load heavier than the weight of years! I see my ever kind and tender-hearted brothers, who must ever bear the taunt, that their own brother died a convict in a state's prison! O my God, *is* it so! Is there no remedy? No—none. The deed is done. I confess it. There is no hope for me. One thing, then, dear mother, I must ask of you. I beseech you, for your own sake and for mine, to forget me! Blot my name out of your remembrance and out of the family records! Let me be as one who was never born! This, I know, will not remove the disgrace; but it will cover up the sense of the shame I have so cruelly brought

upon you! It will not pardon my sins, nor bring me the favor of Heaven, but it will abandon me, as I deserve, to suffer alone the just indignation and wrath of God! Or if you think of me at all, only do it to pray, that God may, by his great mercy, pardon and save at last your wretched and guilty son! W. D."

The following letter, sent by another young convict to his sister is, also, very unlike the one before the last. It is an answer to one he had just received from home.

"*Ohio Penitentiary, May,* 1846.

"My Very Dear Sister,—You do not name father in your letter; but I hope he is well. Nor did you send me his love. Nevertheless, tell him and tell mother that, though I have been a disobedient, undutiful, and wayward son, yet I love them with an affection—*O now tender!* And I pray to God daily, while my hands are employed at labor, to bless them with long life, and with all the happiness I have left for them in this world. I pray, too, that I may live yet to be a blessing to them, and bring joy unexpected to their aged hearts, though it may be at the eleventh hour. O how earnestly I pray to God to pardon all my sins and make me a Christian! If I had taken *their* advice, and prayed to God in other days, I never should have been here. Should they be called hence before I meet them again, tell them, to soothe their last moments, that I am bound to meet them in a better world. I have set my face for glory, and am resolved, by God's help, never to look back, as this is the only hope for me. I scarcely know how or where to drop this subject—this melancholy yet pleasing subject—of amending my life, and going at last to heaven. It is joy to me to know that I have yet a place in my parents' hearts; but it is fearful to reflect that I have so broken those good commandments of God, which those parents so industriously and so early implanted in my mind. All my ruin came from disobedience to my kind

parents. O tell them to pray for me, that I may have God's grace to bear me up in my afflictions, and that I may more sensibly realize that in him, and him only, is my help. * * * *

"Your brother, O. S."

Such, reader, are the lights and shadows of the present life; and nowhere are they more forcibly contrasted than in the life and experience of these wretched men.

CHAPTER XV.

Three brothers—Transmission of character—Bedouin Arabs—Singular fact—A religiously-educated youth—Benefits of whisky-making—An old colored man—His narrative—Horrid treatment—A slaveholder—Beauties of slavery—An insane man—Picture of happy rural life—The love of money—Speculation—Its sequel—The drunkard's cup—From a brother in to a brother out of prison—Two commitments—Mail-robber—Forgery—Attempt at escape from prison—Frustration—Pardon—Letter from a woman in the Ohio penitentiary to her husband in the Indiana penitentiary.

My fourteenth week in the penitentiary opened with a very profitable Sabbath; and it will contain, as here recorded, incidents of the deepest and most thrilling interest.

The morning of Monday, July 27, was characterized by unusually-interesting devotions at the breakfast table; and these exercises were followed by a visit, full of interest to those confined in the hospital.

A part of the afternoon of this day I spent in conversation with three brothers, whose ancestors I knew a great many years ago. I knew their grandfather, their father, and all the branches of the family; and I here refer to them, to show how a character may be handed down, by the laws of nature, from father to son, through many generations. Indeed, it is my firm conviction, from what I have seen and learned in this prison, that not only the physical, but the intellectual and moral traits of parents are given to their offspring, just as certainly and infallibly as life itself. The child is always, in every way, the joint product of his parents. He brings into the world the blended image of them both, sometimes, it is true, partaking more of the one than of the other, but always bearing the marks of his origin from these two persons, made one spirit and one flesh. The grandfather, the father, and the three sons here in prison resembled each other in all their leading traits. Physically, mentally, morally, they were emphati-

cally the same race. Large in size, gross in intellectual character, and sensual in their moral features, and all these in a very eminent and peculiar way, they would be known, everywhere and by all observers, as exactly the same class of men.

This doctrine of transmission of character is one of great interest and importance; and I have, through my whole life, not only read what happened to fall in my way concerning it with pleasure, but have made a great deal of personal observation in respect to it. There are the Jews, for example, who have maintained, to this day, in spite of their wide dispersion and varied experience, the character which history has attributed to them from the beginning. This unchangeableness of national characteristics is owing to their practice, so rigidly observed, of marrying mostly, or solely, among themselves. The Bedouin Arabs, who migrated from one portion of country to another of very different climate, not only began to put on, in the second or third generation after the immigration, a totally different aspect from what their ancestors possessed, but began at once to transmit that change to their descendants, and continued to do so, until the tribe became entirely different from what it had been. There are some tribes, also, in Africa, which passed into that quarter of the world from Asia, at a remote period in history, and whose complexion is known to have been originally nearly white, but whose color began to grow darker, from one generation to another, until, at this time, every child born to them is nearly as black as the native negro of the country. There is said to be another race of men, in Africa, whose height is nearly two feet above the average stature of the African population, who account for their peculiarity of size, by the fact, that they have never mingled with the smaller and degenerate tribes about them. History is not only full of such examples, but many examples, illustrative of the general

law, come, almost daily, within the range of observation of every thoughtful man. I have myself seen, not merely the common physical and mental characteristics of parents pass down to their children, but even an inclination, a tendency, a besetment to certain special habits, both good and bad, to children's children, to the third and fourth generations. I have seen the inclination to steal, to murder, to intoxication, to evil under several special forms, with unerring certainty thus handed down. With some pains I have ferreted out the early life and character of those afterward converted and pious parents of several of our convicts, whose crimes seem to have been the consequence of a natural bias, rather than of a particular temptation, and have almost invariably discovered, that those parents, prior to their conversion, were addicted to similar and often to the same vices as those for which their children had been convicted. The law of descent is just as fixed, as certain, as undeviating as any in the world around us; and it is one which has much to do with every position, public or private, which a man may occupy, from the cradle to the grave.

The three men whose case I was giving, when this topic was suggested, corroborate every thing I have said. They are not simply all alike, as if their characters had been run in the same mold, but their father and grandfather, both of whom married women very much like themselves, were exact prototypes of the three. One of them, it is true, has suffered a slight derangement, while the other two are sane; but it came from a severe blow which he received accidentally on his head. And even in his madness he gives stronger evidence of his similarity to his brothers and family than before; for he no longer has the art, or tries to have it, of concealing any portion of his character, but lets it all out to every one he meets. He is, in fact, a sort of open revelation of the character of his race.

These three men were all committed, as might be expected, for the same offense, though they were not at all under each other's influence when their respective crimes were perpetrated. They all acted separately, independently, freely, and yet all took the same road to the same crime; and they have all met in one place at last. You will learn from this fact, reader, and from the foregoing remarks, that the laws of nature are uniform, if we only had the patience to observe them and find out what they are.

July 28. This morning, after prayers, I went to see a prisoner, who was admitted only yesterday; and I was astonished to find him to be the son of an old acquaintance. His father's history, coupled with that of his large family, should be a warning to all parents in the land. He came to Ohio, many years ago, a good man. He had property, talents, character, and friends. He was a member of a Christian Church, and enjoyed the confidence of the public, far and near. But a powerful temptation fell before him. The love of money, probably his besetting sin, was roused. He saw a fine opening for the erection of a whisky distillery; and, in spite of the remonstrances of the Church and the entreaties of his friends, the distillery was erected, and the whisky began to run. The result was, he died a poor drunkard, not without a penny or a friend, but despised by every one who had ever heard his name. Every son he had was also a drunkard; and the one now here was sent to the penitentiary for an attempt, in a drunken row, to kill his wife. Look, reader, upon the consequences—the natural fruit—of that one great sin.

I told this man that I was glad he had been sent to the prison, as he would now have time to get sober; and I hoped, when the whisky should get entirely out of his system, he might be induced to learn something better than he had ever known. But it is the hardest thing in the world to reform a man who has been brought up by a

whisky-maker, and seen the vice of intemperance constantly recommended by a father's example, from his early years.

Next I called upon an old colored man, who is here for life. He was born a slave, in one of the southern states; and as his history is substantially that of many others in those parts, I will give it, as I have learned it from himself, and from many other sources. Perceiving that the old fellow could not walk much, I inquired of him to know the cause of his lameness. He answered me in nearly the following words: "To tell you that, father Finley, would be to give you the history of my bad life; and if that would be interesting to you, I will relate it all. I was born in the state of ——, a slave. My old master died; and the negroes were divided among his sons. I and my two brothers fell to one of the sons who was much given to drinking, and whose whole estate was soon run through. The land and the negroes were put up for sale. My two brothers and myself were bought by the same man. This man was very cruel to us. One of my brothers went to see his wife, about four miles from where we lived, who had just been confined; and for this offense our master whipped him till he died. This excited me very much; and I said to the other negroes, that my master should never whip me that hard. My master overheard me as I spoke, and called me to him; but I ran with all my might the other way. Hiding in the corn-fields, then in the woods and swamps, I made my escape; but I had no means of getting sufficient food, after the corn was taken in, or had become too hard to eat, to keep me from almost famishing. Almost exhausted with cold and hunger, after four long months of close concealment, I ventured to crawl out of my hiding-place. I went to a farm-house, that stood nearest to where I was. A colored man was there, who sent word to his master that a half-starved, runaway negro was in the house. The fellow dared not do otherwise, though I could see he

pitied me, from the bottom of his heart. His master came, and found me almost speechless with exhaustion. He told his slave to throw me across a horse, and take me home. When they had brought me to the house, they laid me down upon the floor, and sent word to my master. He came to see me, and after making a thorough examination of me, said that, if I ever got well, I should never run away again. So, taking out his knife, and lifting up my feet, he cut the great cords of my heels.* I laid one whole year, in this condition; and, at the end of it, I could only hobble about. My master now set me at the plough; but, maimed as I was, I could not keep up with the team; so my master whipped me severely for this fault.† When I was set down I fainted, and fell to the ground, nearly dead. After many long and weary months I partially recovered, and was put to the plough again; but not being able to do any better than I had done before, and seeing nothing but hard treatment before me, I ran away again, thinking I had better starve in the woods than be whipped to death. I lay in a neighboring swamp until I was nearly dead of hunger; but they found me at last, and, as I was trying to run, my master shot me in the shoulder.‡ I was now, of course, captured; and my master, after he had nearly ruined me, sold me for a trifle, though I had been a man of great strength. The gentleman who bought me was kind to me, giving me the liberty of fishing, of making brooms, and of other light work, by which I might be able to pay for myself, and get free. In this way I earned my freedom, and came to this state. But what could I do? I knew not how to be a

* I examined his feet, and found that the leaders of his legs had been cut. They had grown up again, in large knots, above and below the cuts.

† The whipping must have been severe; for the marks of it still remain, in coarse ridges, in his skin.

‡ I saw the marks of the shot. The shoulder was dreadfully mangled, and nearly torn off

freeman; and if I had known, I had been deprived of all power of making an honest living. So now, as my last end and resting-place, you see me here."

Such, reader, are the beauties of slavery! This is that venerable, patriarchal system, which southern Christians, and southern doctors of divinity, and the professed followers and admirers of John Calvin and of John Wesley, and the disciples of the meek and lowly Jesus in the south, defend at the hazard of every thing dear on earth. They not only quote the Bible in defense of it, but have rent friendships, split Churches, and endangered the stability of the great republic, to maintain a system whose natural results are faintly exhibited in the example just given. Yes, reader, I may well say, faintly exhibited; for, from personal knowledge, I know the practice of slavery in the southern states to be full of cases tenfold worse than this. As John Wesley has said, "It is the vilest," considering the circumstances, "that ever saw the sun!" And yet southern Methodists, who have rent the Methodist Episcopal Church for the single purpose of maintaining the practice of holding slaves among the preachers and members of the connection, profess to be not only legitimate sons of Wesley, but the only people in this country who have maintained his doctrines, and discipline, and spirit without a fault! Good God! Where are the consciences, where is the common sense of these misguided men!

July 29. Last night the prison was disturbed by one of the inmates, an insane man, whose history is a fit illustration of the bad effects of a single vice, or bad principle, when all the rest of the character may be right. This wretched man was the son of good and wealthy parents, who lived and moved in the highest circles of society. They gave him a good education; and in early manhood he married into one of the best families in the county where he lived. His morals were pure, his reputation unimpeachable,

and his conjugal life dawned like a morning in the flowery month of May. With his own outfit added to that of his beautiful and charming wife, he retired to a very rich and lovely section of Ohio, and settled upon a farm. Friends rose up to welcome and gladden him on every side. No scene in the pastoral poets could be found to surpass the neatness, the taste, the order, the tranquility of his rural home. His little white cottage, seated on a small elevation of the deepest green, and covered with all the bloom and beauty of our climate, was noticed by every one who passed along that way. In a few years he had a little group of bright and lovely little children to meet him when he returned from town or field. They overwhelmed him with their prattle, some hanging at his fingers, others climbing up his sides; and he repaid them with showers of kisses, as if they had been blossoms falling from his flowering heart. His wife met him at the door with a graver but deeper love, unless, in envy of her younger days, she too frolicked to meet him like a joyous girl. Such was his life for many years; but a change came upon him after all. Beneath all that wealth of beauty, of happiness, of love, one dangerous passion lurked unseen. It was an inordinate love of money. On his frequent visits to his little market town, where he went to exchange his produce for other comforts and necessaries of life, he had made a pretty extensive acquaintance with business men. Some of them were patterns of honesty and honor, like himself; but there were others, as in all such towns, who wished to live, not by honest labor, but out of the labor of other men. They were speculators. Knowing that this thrifty farmer had both property and credit, they laid many schemes before him from time to time, by which they said a great and sudden fortune could be made. The bait was at last but too successful. A company was organized to enter into a speculation in flour. His farm and credit, much against the prayers and entreaties of his wife,

and against the sober advice of his best friends, were staked on the uncertain throw. The die was cast; and lo! like too many others, to him it proved a blank, though his partners still flaunted in their wealth and pride, probably at his expense. He was stripped of all he had. He was turned out from his little cottage home. His wife, true to her heart's love, followed him into the depths of his poverty, bringing her children with her. She made prodigious, almost superhuman exertions to make the best of their altered condition; but the struggle was too hard. Her husband had become discouraged. Not knowing, like many other men, how to begin the world without a dollar, with all the little resolution left to him he could not tell the first step to be taken in such a case. His discouragement settled at last into despondency; but his wife rose still higher in her efforts to redeem or save him from his fall. He saw his poverty too forcibly, in spite of all her exertions to conceal it from his view. The raggedness of his children, his empty table, his straitened purse, the deafening cry of creditors, the threats of sheriffs and other officers of the law, could not be put aside. To drown his sorrows, alas! alas! he finally resorted to the fatal cup! The deed was now done. He became a wretched drunkard. The spirits of his noble wife sank to rise no more. His children became worse than common beggars. He, to get away from so much domestic misery, at last joined a band of robbers, and soon after, with the loss of his reason, found his resting-place in one of these gloomy cells. He is now the most awfully-miserable and wretched being I ever knew. His family—God only knows where they are; but one thing is certain: this man was not contented with enough. He was greedy for sudden gains. He hasted to make himself rich, and has pierced himself, and lovely wife, and once amiable children, through and through with thorns. Reader, beware that you travel not the same dangerous road!

The following letter was handed me to-day to examine before it was to be mailed. It is touching; and one portion of it must remind the reader of the exhortations he sometimes hears from a faithful pulpit, when the minister portrays the sorrows and remorse of those who perish in their sins. May it be a warning to the careless in relation to the affairs of this world and of the world to come!

"*Ohio Prison, June* 29, 1846.

"My Dear Brother,—I have not time to write you much, but I cannot longer refrain sending you a few hasty lines. Although I am incarcerated in a prison, and have been very wicked for many years, and have forfeited all claims of friendship on my relations by the disgrace I have brought upon them, I have yet not lost my natural affection for you, my dear brother, and hope you have not thrown me entirely away. It would give me great pleasure to know that I have still any sort of place in your affections. The remembrance of our youthful days, of our early childhood, still rushes on my recollection—when we were happy together under the paternal roof—when we were employed in the sweet pastimes of innocent childhood. But, O, those days of innocence are gone—gone, never, never to return! O, it is painful to me in the extreme to think that I have followed them by such a wicked life, which has brought me to such a place, and given such unmerited disgrace and pain to my kind-hearted friends. There will be one joy left me from the wreck of my past days, if I have not utterly severed all the ties which once so happily bound our two hearts together. O, my brother, if tears could wash away a sin, an evil, a disgrace, all had been washed away long ago. If you can find a heart to rejoice at any thing which may happen to such a wretch as I am, it will be, I think, to hear, if you can any longer believe my word, that I resolved, some time since, on leading an entirely different life. I see to my sorrow that the way of the transgressor is truly hard.

I have resolved to forsake every known sin. This, I find, is my only safe way. Any other will be dangerous for such a one as I. I must cleave to God, my only Savior; and what is best of all, my dear brother, if I am not myself mistaken, I have already found that Friend who will not leave me nor forsake me, unless I first leave him. Will you believe me, my brother, that my mind is now at rest. My sin-divided heart has found a resting-place in Jesus Christ. I hope, my dear brother, if you will not revolt at receiving an exhortation from such a one—I hope, I say, that you have not been forgetful of this great matter; that you are preparing to meet God, the judge of all the earth. Though you are so much better than I have been, yet religion is necessary also for you. Let us try to live for a future state; and if we never meet in this life, let us try to meet in heaven. We have many means of grace in this prison. We have the Bible, besides many other good books, a good Sabbath school, family prayer every morning at the breakfast table, and a good sermon every Sabbath from our worthy and venerable chaplain, father Finley. Should God spare me, my brother, to get out of this prison, I trust I shall lead a very different life. Pray for your unworthy brother, and write soon.

S."

July 30. Two prisoners were brought in yesterday, one for ten years, the other for six. The former is a young man of only twenty years of age. He has a wife and child. His relatives are nearly all members of a Christian Church. He was once himself a member; but he neglected his religious duties, gave up secret prayer, and soon lost all sense of the presence of God. His is the life of a backslider; and his course has been quickly run. Others, who move more slowly, take a longer time, but often end at the same place at last. Let such beware how they trifle with solemn professions and sacred things. The other was an older, a wickeder, and a more hardened man.

July 31. This morning I went to converse with a prisoner at the instance of one of our judges of court. The man has been here eight years. His crime was robbing the mail. As an effort was on foot for obtaining his pardon, the judge wished me to examine into and report his case. His history I found to be briefly this: In early life he married a young lady, who, he says, had another lover, whom she would not entirely abandon. The young man used to visit his house under suspicious circumstances. The husband then proposed to his wife that they should remove to another place. She refused. This refusal confirmed him in his worst suspicions, and he consequently abandoned her. Turning himself loose again upon the world, after this cruel misfortune, he soon formed bad habits and bad connections. At length a proposal was made by some of his companions to go and rob the mail, and he consented. They succeeded but he was captured and tried, and sentenced for ten years. He has been a very orderly and obedient prisoner, with one exception. Taking occasion of a prisoner's leaving, he forged a petition for his release, which the said prisoner was to lodge for him in the post-office. The plan by which it was to be carried out was quite ingenious. They made a false bottom to the box in which the prisoner was to pack his effects. Laying the petition in upon the first bottom, they laid the other bottom over it, and nailed them together. All was safe, until just before the departure of the convict, when one of the accomplices, fearing detection and punishment, betrayed his trust and revealed the trick. Since then, as before, this man has been in every way obedient; and as he has a widowed mother entirely dependent on him for her livelihood, he was this day released, after having spent eight long years within these gloomy walls. A dear exploit was that when he robbed the mail.

I will close the record of this week by giving the reader the copy of a letter written by a woman confined in this

prison to her husband in the penitentiary of Indiana. What an awful picture these following lines disclose!

"*Ohio Penitentiary, July* 29, 1846.

"My Dear and Beloved Husband,—I received your letter, written through the warden of the Indiana prison, which gave me to know that you are alive and well. I cannot express the satisfaction I felt to think that you had not forgotten our little children, though I had begun to think that you had forgotten your unfortunate wife. I am well; but, O, what must I say about our little ones, that are scattered—we know not where! My heart bleeds, while my eyes flow with tears. I have tried to find out where they are. When I was arrested my sister had the charge of them; but not being able to support them, I suppose she had to put them out. Two of them, I have learned, were sent to the orphan asylum; but our daughter was bound out by the overseers of the poor. I was arrested on the third of May and lay in jail until August, when I had my trial, and was sentenced for three years. My mother died the day I was sentenced; and my sister says that my poor old father cannot long survive the stroke. O that I could see him, and throw myself at his feet and ask his pardon! It might be some comfort to him; for I have no doubt my mother's death was caused by my misfortunes; and now my dear old father's gray hairs must go down in sorrow to the grave! O, will my God and my parents forgive me, a poor, broken-hearted sinner! I want to see you. I want, O how much! to see our children. My dear husband, will you excuse me for not writing to you sooner? My apology is that I thought you had sorrows enough of your own, without being doubly weighed down with mine. You may have cast me off; but I thank God you are spared, and that you will soon be at liberty to look after our more than orphaned children. I should rejoice to be spared, also, to see you all once more together.

Then, I think, I could suffer to be cast off or to die. I am not without comfort. Although in prison, I have a *kind* warden; and we also have a fine, fatherly minister, who preaches to us every Sabbath. I have been treated with the utmost kindness since I have been here. Let me again say, I hope I shall be spared to see you again face to face.

"Your wife, L."

There, reader, can you find a parallel to that picture, in the history of this sin-cursed and miserable world? If so, I hope there may not be many such appalling examples of depravity, within even the ruined and blighted family of man.

CHAPTER XVI.

Sabbath stillness—Two sermons by Rev. Dr. Elliott—A time of power—Letter from a daughter to her mother—The beginning and the end of sin—Another case of disobedience to parents—Letter from a youth to an old friend—Bad company—Admonition—An only son—Letter from a convict to a friend in the country—Visit to the hospital—A sin-sick soul—Dialogue—Religious experience—Departure of a convict youth—Parting gift—A happy man—Another discharged convict—An unparalleled case.

Another beautiful Sabbath morning has dawned upon us. The sky is serene and mellow. The dew is settled on every leaf and blade of grass. The sun is rising like an armed man to run his race. The heat of the day will be almost overpowering. The fields are either shorn of their crops or are standing ready for the harvest. O that the same might be said of the field which God has given me to cultivate!

The Rev. Dr. Elliott, editor of the Western Christian Advocate, and author of a celebrated work on Romanism, visited me to-day. At eight o'clock he preached, with great propriety and power, to the women. It was interesting to see how they were amazed at the power of that powerful man. They hardly knew what to say of him, such was the masterly strength with which he handled his subject, such was his fervor of speech, and such the enthusiasm he manifested in their behalf. At eleven o'clock the Doctor preached in the chapel to the men, where he was still more powerful, more warm, more animated in thought and manner of delivery. He was honored by the presence of Judges M'Lean and Leavitt, who were deeply interested in his sermon. I have lived to see and know, personally and familiarly, a great many able men; but my friend, Dr. Elliott, in some respects, surpasses all the great men I ever knew. Many are more finished, others more beautiful,

some more learned, though but a few; but for native strength of intellect, for abstract force and power, I never saw his match. He builds with strong materials. Neither hay, wood, nor stubble is employed by him. Hardly can I say that he uses gold or silver. He works, rather, with solid granite. His fabrics are all built up of rock and mortar. When one is completed, though it may not be as highly polished as the work of some others, it is solid and massive, bidding fair to stand as long as the Egyptian pyramids. His sermons to-day were exactly of this character. Though entirely off-hand, there was matter and strength enough in them to supply one of your pretty preachers with a month's material for the pulpit. Our two learned judges smiled often at the sudden strokes of originality and power; and the prisoners stared, and shook, and wept, bending before him like the tops of a large forest to a passing tempest!

Monday, August 3. The following is the opening paragraph of a letter written by a female prisoner, a young and rather beautiful woman, to her mother. As this daughter of sorrow was never married, her sin will be partly apparent from her own words; and the remainder of it was only the fruit, or natural consequence, of what the reader may here see. May her example be a warning to her sex!

"*Ohio State Prison, July*, 1846.

"My Dear Mother,—You cannot tell how I long to hear from you. You were never in my circumstances—no, you were never such a sinful, wretched, afflicted, abandoned being as I am; and so you cannot conceive my misery. How I weep to see some of you—my parents, or the children, and particularly my own unfortunate little boy! O, my mother, will you come and see me? Bring father with you. Or if you have cast me off, and refuse to see me, send me my babe, that I may look upon it. He knows not yet that he has a living mother, and yet one that is dead to him. Should he live to years, what will his feelings

be toward me, when he thinks of his wretched mother, of what she has done and suffered, and of the disgrace in which she brought him forth! O my innocent, but disgraced and suffering child! Forgive your erring mother the fault of your unhappy fate! And you, my parents—it breaks my heart to think I am bringing your gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. O, my much-offended, much-injured parents, will you, can you, forgive your penitent and suffering child? I know I am unworthy your friendship, to say nothing of your love; but could you realize how grateful I must feel for any expression of your favor, and how deeply I repent, and how sincerely and sorrowfully I ask your forgiveness for all my sins and for the afflictions I have brought upon you, you could not help, it seems to me, having pity on me, however I have separated myself from your regards. But let me name another thing. I fear, I daily dread, a worse separation—a separation that can never be repaired. You are the followers of the meek and lowly Savior; and heaven, my dear parents, is sure to be your home. But when you arrive there, and find many of our family in that eternal resting-place, of the virtuous and good, where, O where, shall be your sinful, unfortunate, and sorrowing child! Ah, mother, it behooves me most, whatever you may think of me, to seek God's pardon, and prepare for another world. If you cannot, without too much pain, see me here, I trust that, by God's help, I shall be prepared to meet you where sin, and disgrace, and shame, and sorrow will never come.

"Your erring child, L."

Strange it is that this woman did not think of all this before her evil deeds were done. Few sinners go to ruin without a candle in their hands, though many continue, in one way or another, to quench the illuminating flame. Their darkness, which they think is going to excuse them, is then only the greater sin.

The following is the biography of this young woman: Born of respectable parents, she was, first of all, headstrong; would have her own way; was not indulged to her hurt, but broke all restraints; in spite of her parents, began to go to balls, theatres, and other places of fashionable amusement; by one of her new associates she was seduced; became the mother of a child, then a "genteel" prostitute, last a thief, which concluding character has finally given her a resting-place, and a repenting-place, within the gloomy walls of this penitentiary. Young ladies, girls at home, beware how you take the first step to ruin by being headstrong and disobedient to your parents! We never, or seldom, fall all at once. The road to infamy is that

"*Facilis descensus Averni,*"

so graphically mentioned by the classic poet. Yes, it is an easy, slippery, down-hill road. Keep your feet entirely from it, and you are safe.

The above example of obstinate disobedience to parental advice reminds me of a second case, which may be of advantage to another class of transgressors, if they will be careful to heed the warning. D. is a young man of good talents, rather mild in his disposition, and possessed of several engaging traits of character. He had a faithful young friend, who, in other years, when D. was just beginning to show some signs of unsteady habits, used to warn him with much ardor. Sometimes, rather to frighten him, I suppose, than speaking his real opinions, he would tell D. that his course, unless changed, would terminate in a state prison. But the warnings were laughed at and rejected. This same young man, D., now writes to that old and faithful friend a letter of confession, which must have cost him many bitter feelings and self-reproaches. The following is an extract:

"*Penitentiary of Ohio.*

"My Dear, Remembered, and Faithful Friend,—Time was when you and I were joyous and happy. Though we

were equals in happiness, and in many other respects, there was always a difference between us. You were ever conscientious, fearful of doing wrong, particular to do just right. I, on the contrary, was reckless, fearless of consequences, with little thought as to the moral character of my actions. Still, I must say, in justice to myself, that I never intended to be a bad man. My bad conduct was rather the fruit of a careless disregard of right and wrong. I lived without thinking of my conduct, excepting when you would point out to me some error, or transgression of what you regarded as strictly honest and upright; but you know I used to tell you—and I really thought so—that you were too nice, too particular, too fastidious, in your moral judgment. I feel it now a solemn duty I owe to you, and to my injured sister, to let you know, after my long silence, during which you have probably not heard from me, my present unfortunate and disgraceful situation, the fruit of my not heeding your wise counsel. Let it not startle you: your prediction is now—O must I say it?—at last too true. I *am* in the penitentiary. Yes, here I am at last, after all my disbelief and ridicule of your advice and warning, a poor, guilty, wretched, miserable prisoner, the companion of infamy, crime, and degradation! True, I shall at once, I fear, lose the last particle of your esteem for me; but, at the cost of a terrible struggle of mind, I have been compelled, by my sense of obligation, to send you this frank avowal of my condition, and of the truth of your predictions. Your past goodness to me, however, encourages me to hope that you will not now entirely spurn me from your sympathies. I wish to say emphatically, that it was *bad company*, just as you warned me, which wrought my ruin. O my friend, I have lived to deplore my headstrong, thoughtless, wicked course; but this will not restore me to respectability. I know there must be a deeper work than man can do, before I am recovered from my fall. But, my

friend, my faithful friend, do you forgive me? I thank you for all your kind admonitions, though I have ruined myself in spite of them. I have learned, at last, the value of your counsels, but have to pay awfully dear for this better knowledge of what I might have learned from you so easy! May God pity me, and save me! Adieu.

"Your unworthy friend, D."

This, my youthful reader, is the besetting fault of all young people. They have too much confidence in their own strength. They think the advice of their parents and older friends is obsolete, shallow, out of date. They think, too, that, whatever has become of those who are held up to them as examples, there is no danger in their own case. *They* can go just as far as it is perfectly safe to go, and then return as easily as they went. Fatal error! Sin, thus deliberately practiced, is the worst kind of sin. It is also the most dangerous, because it becomes a habit before the victim has learned the use of fear. He slides imperceptibly from one degree of guilt to another, till the habit of transgression is riveted upon him, and there is no escape but by the narrow door of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. It is strange that the world will not become wiser by experience. One generation will not learn from the most dreadful mistakes of former generations. The new generation rushes on the same road at the end of which the old one perished. There is, evidently, an infatuation; and that infatuation is based on the deep depravity of the human heart.

There is a young man now here, who, several years ago, immigrated to this state from Virginia with his widowed mother. The old matron inherited from her relatives about twelve hundred dollars in cash; and with this little competency she sought a home in this state, where she might purchase a few acres of ground, and spend her days in the education of her only son. To do this she had not, as the

reader must see, a single dollar to spare. With all her economy, and industry, and diligence, she could but barely execute her purpose with such slender means. But, to accomplish it, she left the home of her childhood, her native state, and the society of all her friends, to make her abode among strangers, and push her way on alone. The great idea of her mind, the sole object of her heart, was to educate for a life of honor and usefulness this only and darling son. Behold the sequel! That son, when his education is nearly finished, when his widowed mother was about sinking to the earth in consequence of her privations and exertions in his behalf, and when he was about to become, as she had long anticipated, the joy and support of her declining years—that son, at this critical moment, fell into the company of a female who proved his ruin. To furnish himself with fine clothes, such as he thought he ought to wear in her society, he robbed his poor mother of her hard-earned money, which she had laid up to spend upon his mind. When that scanty treasure was exhausted, he borrowed money on false pretenses, and for the same purposes. Last of all, goaded by his pride, drawn forward by his unholy passion, stung by a poverty which he would gladly have concealed from her, he committed a robbery, was detected, tried, and sentenced to this prison for a long term of years, while his poor, widowed, heroical mother sank in sorrow to her grave! The following is taken from a letter written by him to a friend:

"*Ohio Penitentiary, July,* 1846.

"My Friend,—No words can express what I feel. I would give a kingdom, were a kingdom mine to give, to be placed back again where I once was; but I must now suffer, first imprisonment, then the pangs of remorse, till death. Willingly would I part with my right arm, could I be a creditable citizen again. May God have mercy on me! You will naturally wish to know why I changed my name.

The reason was, I wished to get for ever clear of her, who has been my ruin, and whom I must detest to the day of my death. Had I never met with that debased woman, instead of being a miserable convict shut up for crime, I might now have been a respectable, perhaps an honorable man. May God forbid that your little boy, when he grows up, should ever follow in my path! O that my example might be a warning to all young men; but I have not this comfort—of thinking that my example will ever do any good. I have fallen so low, I shall never be thought of by the world again; and should my case ever accidentally be mentioned to a young man, he will think that he can go my way as far as he pleases, then turn about. So thought I; but, O, it is a terrible delusion! It is the fatal error that misleads all bad men. They do not, as a common thing, intend to die as they have lived; but the longer they go on, the stronger become their habits; and the day of turning back never comes. My mother! O what a word for me to utter! Peace to her memory! She raised me well—how well you know—at what pains you know. But all is gone. She is dead; and I am worse than dead. It may make you shudder, but I have often prayed that I might die, because I feel unworthy, unfit, to live. Poor, foolish, wicked man, young in years but old in crime, I feel that I have no right to live. Nor have I any motive to remain in a world I have so terribly abused. What is there here for me? When I look all over it, as carefully as I can, notwithstanding the name by which I called you, I see that I have not one solitary friend. You know not, dear sir, what such a sentence means. Not a friend! Not one on earth! No friend in heaven! None in the wide universe! Then think that to myself I am not a friend! I have been, I am yet, my worst enemy! I wish to fly from men, from God, from myself, from every living and existing thing, and hide me in the deep of annihilation! O

that I could die, and never live again! That death would be sweeter than life to me. He who could preach me such a Gospel would be to me an evangelist indeed. But no. I am immortal! Dreadful thought! I must live and face my sins! I must answer to my Judge! I must behold the face of my mother, of my Savior, of my offended God! I have no fault to find with any of the officers of this prison. The warden seems to be a very kind and tender-hearted man. The guards are prompt but feeling. We have, also, a good, faithful chaplain, who preaches feelingly to us every Sabbath, and takes as much interest in us as if we were all his particular friends. But what is all this to me? What is the Bible, what is Christianity, what is preaching to a man, when all these condemn him, and that justly, to everlasting shame! But I can write no more. You know the comforts of reflecting that you have made yourself and attained to honor and distinction. I know what it is to be, not a self-made, but a self-ruined man! God grant this awful wisdom never may be yours! J. W."

August 4. This day was spent chiefly in the hospital, where there are many sick, and some inquiring what they shall do to be saved.

August 5. Most of this day, also, was given to the sick. In conversation with them I found most to be penitent, indeed all, excepting only two or three. As I was leaving them toward evening, one of the convalescent met me at the door, and said he wished to tell me how he felt, and then get my opinion of his spiritual condition.

"Very well," said I, "speak on. What are your feelings?"

"Well," said he, "I have several feelings which I wish you to consider separately, and tell me what to think of them."

"Name them, then," I replied, "distinctly, so that I can think of them as you proceed."

"First of all, then," said the man, with a cheerful smile, "I feel happy and perfectly contented with my lot."

"Very well, what next?"

"Secondly, in praying I feel an assurance that God listens to my prayers."

"What next?"

"Thirdly, I can pray for my worst enemies, and feel pity for their evils, sorrow for their misfortunes, and approbation for their good qualities. I love them without exception.'

"Is there any thing else?"

"Yes, I enjoy the world better than I did. Food, clothing, books—every thing seems to me better than formerly; and at night, instead of having bad dreams and unsteady sleep, I lay me down in peace, sleep quietly and soundly, feeling that God is with me in my cell. That feeling is the strongest of them all. I know that God is not any more there than he used to be, nor more than he is everywhere else; but, strange as it may seem, as soon as I go to my cell, I feel that I am not alone as I used to feel—that he is with me, that he hears every thing I say, *every thing I think!* What do you think of all this? Is this religion?"

"It is not for me to say," I replied, "whether you have religion or not, but these marks look very much like those laid down by the apostles." I then went on to expound to him the fruits of the Spirit as catalogued by St. Paul. I have no doubt the man is soundly converted; but we shall know him by his fruits.

August 6. One of our best young men left us this morning. He has been here seven long years at hard service. Since I came to the prison, he has professed religion; and I fully believe his heart is right with God. He is now, whatever he was once, one of the most amiable young men I ever knew. He goes out with a character as white as wool. God has purified him; and he is, consequently, clear

indeed. He is far from home, without acquaintances or friends; but he carries with him that which will certainly recommend him to all discerning men. As he left the prison, I went with him to the outer gate. Never, till that moment, did I know how much I loved him. How I felt for him, too, as I saw him about to emerge into the wicked world without any one to direct him in his path! I gave him, as a token of my affection, my pocket Testament, which was a precious book to me, that it might be not only a companion to him in his solitary pilgrimage to his former home, but a memorial of our friendship, to be preserved till death. I parted with him as I would have parted with my own son, whom I never expected to see again. He fell on my neck and wept; and I shed the tears of true affection on him. His last words were, "Father Finley, if I never meet you again on earth, I will try, by God's grace, to see you in heaven. Farewell!" He turned away in tears; and I stood looking after him as far as I could see him, all the time praying God to have him in his care. I trembled for him, notwithstanding my strong confidence in his character, knowing as I do the evil that is in the world. But I commit him, with a trustful heart, to the faithful keeping of my God!

August 7. In conversation with a prisoner, M. W. M., I had the opportunity of seeing a striking exhibition of the happiness which religion is calculated to procure. He is overflowing with hope, and peace, and joy. His very countenance carries evidence enough of his inward state. The following is what he told me about the circumstances of his conversion: "On the first day you came to this prison, you made a visit to the hospital, where I was then confined. I was the first man you shook hands with; and you exhorted me, if I wished to be healed in soul as well as in body, to send after the great Physician, who was able, you said, to apply a balm that never failed to cure. You

said my messenger to that kind and powerful Physician was prayer. I was greatly struck with your exhortation and the manner of it; and the thought it conveyed never left my heart. I thought of it continually from that hour; and it even so haunted me that I went, at last, for the first time in my life, into a secret place to pray. With many mental conflicts, vibrating continually between hope and black despair, I kept up the struggle until a short time since, when God sent me his pardoning love. And now, father Finley, I am a happy man. I am perfectly contented to be here or anywhere else. I can feel such joy as now overflows my soul. I can see the hand of God over me in all my ways; and I can perceive that he has been to me an unseen but ever-present guide from my earliest years. But it is only a few days that I could realize his presence and feel his love." What a world would this be did every man in it feel as this man feels and live as this man lives!

August 8. A man was dismissed to-day, whose character and habits greatly confirm the opinions expressed heretofore in relation to the transmission of characteristic traits. His father and mother were both habitual drunkards at the time this man was born; and they had been drunkards a long time before. From infancy he has had an unconquerable thirst for strong drink; and during his boyhood it was impossible to keep him from his cups by the strongest motives that an astonished community could present. He could be neither coaxed, nor scared, nor driven from the fatal drink. Liquor of some sort he would have at the hazard of every thing on earth. As he grew up to man's estate, it cannot be said that the thirst increased rapidly by habit, for it was about as bad as it well could be the year he was born. To be drunk seemed to be the sole object for which he lived. Crime, of course, followed in the rear of such a life; but since he has been in prison, he has manifested no particular sin, or wicked trait—nothing

malicious, revengeful, or the like; and yet his thirst for every thing in the shape, or with the scent, of alcoholic drink has shown itself in the most remarkable ways I ever witnessed in any man. Besides other practices too numerous to be specified, he would steal and drink the yeast from the bakery, and pour it down his throat as if it had been the fabled nectar on which the Olympian deities slaked their thirst. This man, emphatically, was conceived and brought forth in sin!

CHAPTER XVII.

Morning prayer—Lecture to the women—Sermon from Romans vi, 22—An obstacle to the conversion of prisoners mentioned—Conversion of legislators—Two commitments—Death of a prisoner—The hospital—A penitent seeker—Visit to one of the workshops—Weaving shop—Commitment of a counterfeiter—An exhortation—Escape of our cook—A pardon—A villain from birth—Counsel—Death scene and burial—Another prisoner's term expired—A suggestion.

As several Sabbaths have been permitted to pass without a special record, I will here give the labors of this day (August 9) particularly. First, we had a blessed season of prayer at the breakfast table, all the prisoners showing signs of great interest, and many of them shedding tears. Next I went to the hospital, where a prisoner was very sick, but, contrary to our expectations, still living. For the first time in many days he knew me, and reached out his shriveled hand to salute me. We bowed around his bedside and commended him to God most fervently. I must say of that time of prayer, that it was peculiarly impressive to me, and it seemed to exert a deep influence on the invalid. There was an easy access to the throne of grace; and the very words of prayer seemed to be sweeter than honey to our mouth.

At eight o'clock, according to our standing custom, I lectured to the women from the thirty-second Psalm. God gave me great liberty, and it seemed as if every hard heart would break. There was more feeling among the females than I had ever before witnessed.

At eleven we all assembled, the females excepted, in the chapel. Every thing was as orderly as in a church. The prisoners appeared in better health and spirits than common. They waited almost with impatience for the opening of the service. On some faces I read joy; on others there was seriousness; and on all sobriety, candor, and attention. I

never preached to a more attentive congregation in my life. My text this day was in Romans vi, 22: "And now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." In the treatment of this subject I pursued the following simple method:

I. Man's condition in his state of bondage.

II. The power of this bondage.

III. The mode of getting free from it.

IV. The consequences or marks of this freedom.

1. Bearing fruit unto holiness.

2. The obtaining of everlasting life.

It was a soul-stirring time. God was evidently with the sermon. The heart of my congregation was broken up. At the commencement of the discourse, where I was speaking of our bondage, many sighs were heard from the bosoms of these imprisoned beings. The powerful grasp with which sin bound us, while in a state of nature, could be illustrated from the example, from the experience, from the consciousness of every man before me; and when this appeal was made to them, their heads fell, and, with down-cast eyes and heaving breasts, they seemed to say, "We know all this far too well!" But it is always a pleasure to a preacher, whose heart is in his work, to change from the darker to the brighter side. My subject had a brighter side; and no sooner did I begin to portray the mode of getting free from this cruel bondage, by availing ourselves of the provisions of the atonement, by repentance toward God, and by faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, than their heads began to come up again, their eyes put on more brightness, and hope began to dawn upon their sad faces. Last of all, as I discoursed of the results of the gracious spiritual freedom thus procured, of a life of holiness here below, and of a life of purity and happiness in heaven, those same eyes followed my finger as I pointed upward, those same faces

shone with a momentary rapture, and their lips became involuntarily moved with rejoicing. There is only one thing lacking to have a powerful revival sweep all through these halls and dungeons: that is, the privilege of calling seekers of religion forward for prayers, of holding special prayer meetings for the conversion of those convicted, and of putting them into weekly classes, as we do in Church, in order to build them up by particular conversations and needed counsel. Could this simple, Wesleyan, evangelical machinery be put into operation here, in addition to our present efforts of a private and public character, I verily believe that we might easily gather these straying souls into the fold of Christ by scores and hundreds. Nor can I see sufficient reason why set times might not be appropriated, under suitable regulations, to this important business. If reformation, as well as punishment, is a great part of the object of imprisoning these criminals, there certainly can be no theoretical objection to such an arrangement; and that a good revival of religion, however promoted, would do more than all other means toward such reformation, will be questioned by no one but those who are decidedly skeptical in religious matters. I firmly believe, from such experience as I have had, that all this might be accomplished, not only without detriment but with great help to the right discipline of the institution, were there as great an interest in the reformation of these men as in making money out of their hard labor. For this lack of duty, however, neither the warden nor employers are to be held accountable, as the state itself, to which we are all amenable, and which provides in all respects for us, has never lifted its eyes high enough to see so pure, so disinterested, so benevolent an idea. Nor can we expect any thing quite so liberal and enlightened from our rulers, so long as the most of them are unconverted, irreligious men, who think more of party than they do of either religion, morality, or reformation. Until the

people begin to return us as representatives and senators a better class of men than we usually meet with in the halls of legislation, either in our own state or in our associate republics, the first question with philanthropists will not be how we can best take care of and reform the wretched and abandoned, but how our lawgivers themselves can be converted to God, and rendered safe for the high trusts committed to them. In fact, the question is, as it was when the Latin adage was manufactured:

"*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*"

or, in plainer English,

Who shall guard against our guardians!

Monday, August 10. This day a colored boy's time is out. He is a cripple, and partially deranged—an object of pity, indeed. I gave him a Bible and a prayer-book, but I think he will not be long out of prison. He was born with a kind of instinct of murder in him. When at all impassioned, he wishes to kill every body. There is a sort of sad sublimity about him when enraged.

Two prisoners were admitted to-day. One of them is a young man, committed for a year. The other is over forty, and is here for ten years. He has left a wife and five children to weep and mourn over his dreadful fall. It is enough to say that he was a drunkard; for drunkards are always on the highway to ruin. The imprisonment of fully three-fourths of all the prisoners now here can be traced directly to the intoxicating bowl; and in all probability the ruin of the other fourth is more or less the consequence of the same prolific cause.

One of the prisoners died to-day; and I have just returned from a *post-mortem* examination of his brain. There was no considerable inflammation in that organ; but it seemed to be full of water. While standing by, I thought less of the examination, though this was curious and instructive, than of the horror of dying in a prison. I had attended this

man closely during his whole sickness. No father, no mother, no kind relative however distant in connection, no friend, not an acquaintance, not even a stranger, called to see him at the hour of his departure. No soothing word came to him from his house and kindred. No voice of forgiveness calmed his spirit in its last anguish. No ray of love, warm from the heart of his once pleasant home, fell upon his dying pillow. With the exception of my own visits, and the visits of the warden and other officers, this poor man died alone. He was thus alone, when the summons came to him—alone while traveling through the valley of the *shadow* of death—alone when he took his first step into that region of *real* death from which no traveler returns. Death is sufficiently appalling to any man under the most favorable of circumstances; but to die thus, a public malefactor, a condemned criminal, where not even one's friends and relatives will visit him, is truly awful. But this man bore his last misfortune with a heroic, or, rather, with a Christian spirit; for God had undoubtedly pardoned his sins and enrolled his name in the book of life. To the very last moment he trusted in the promises of God; and he seemed, in return, to draw comfort and even joy, in his final struggle, from the heavenly world. How sweet must religion be to such a man in such a death! How wonderful, how past description, the transition he so suddenly experiences, if truly a child of God, from the walls of a gloomy prison to the wide freedom and resplendent glory of the spiritual state!

Afterward I called to see another sick man in the hospital. I found him engaged in prayer. On returning from this visit I met another prisoner, who has been seeking religion for several months. He has at last found peace. Yesterday was a great day for him; and this morning he says he awoke praising God in his dreams. I warned him against the temptations of the enemy, who would pursue him fiercely; but I assured him that he would be saved, if

he kept himself in the hands of God. I observed to him, also, that he would not have to defend himself against temptations, even in the ordinary way of self-defense; but his tact in foiling the enemy would consist in keeping himself under the broad shield of his great Protector. Notwithstanding these trials, I told him that the way to heaven would be a happy road, which has its flowers and pleasant prospects as well as difficulties.

I was next sent for to visit a prisoner in the workshops. I found a man in great distress in relation to his final salvation. He had made many efforts to obtain the pardon of his sins, but said that he had not been successful; and he was now discouraged, and ready to give up the struggle, unless I could give him some additional advice. I gave him such encouragements as I thought he needed, exhorting him by all means not to give up seeking after the salvation of his soul. A reaction ensued against his despondency, and I left him strongly resolved to continue his efforts until he should obtain mercy and peace from God.

On my return I passed through the weavers' shop, where I saw a very young man, who has been anxious on account of his future welfare, and with whom I had frequently conversed. I laid my hand upon his shoulder as affectionately as I could, when he broke forth into a flood of tears. He was truly penitent for his sins, and I was encouraged to think that he would be a converted and happy man.

August 11. A counterfeiter was brought in to-day. He was one of a large company of counterfeiters, whose operations embraced several of our largest states. This man has been at the work for many years. He is said to have been a leader among this class of evil-doers. He is charged also with having corrupted hundreds of our most promising and enterprising young men. Whether all these charges were sustained at the trial, I cannot say; but there is no improbability of their being true, as he is a man of

splendid talents. He would be capable of filling almost any office in the gift of his fellow-citizens. He has been a good neighbor, kind and benevolent to all around him—has lived in good style, and his family connections are generally possessed of respectability. Forty-five others of this company have been arrested in Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, and Pennsylvania. I have never seen a man apparently so mortified at the idea of his imprisonment. After having read the rules of the prison to him, and explained to him the manner of his new life, I exhorted him warmly to try the comforts of religion in this his evil day.

Last night our cook made his escape. His plan was both bold and ingenious. As he was passing through the hall at the close of his day's work, his guard being before him with a lighted candle, he stepped forward and blew out the light. Then springing through a window and running over the palisades, he made his way out and reached the corn-field. Here he left his striped pantaloons, replacing them with a pair which he had dexterously provided for the occasion. It being night, and the corn being very high and dense, it was impossible to pursue him successfully; but, though he has the advantage of a night's start, he will undoubtedly be overtaken and brought back. The warden of the prison has offered for him a reward of one hundred dollars. This will set in motion hundreds of money-loving men; and the man has no means of making his way through the country without occasionally calling at some house for bread. He will thus be certainly detected; for his size, and form, and cast of confidence, are all minutely set forth in every principal newspaper in the land. Poor fellow! His sentence was for thirty years; and he had behaved himself so well since his imprisonment that he would soon have been pardoned out. Now, alas! should he be retaken, his case becomes entirely hopeless for the remainder of his term, and he will therefore probably die in prison and fill the prisoner's grave.

August 12. This morning a young man was pardoned out by the governor. He had been badly educated from his earliest years. Having spent two years in prison, and having behaved himself very well, he was considered worthy of this favor. But the strongest inducement to his release from prison grew out of the condition of his father's family. The father having lately died, had left a poor and helpless widow, with a number of young and still more helpless children. This young man, being the oldest of the family, was now properly its head, and could do much toward supporting it. But I fear the good intentions of the governor, and the benevolent exertions of the poor widow's friends, will be utterly disappointed in the end. The young man's heart is thoroughly corrupted. He is addicted to drunkenness, gambling, and stealing, almost from his mother's arms. Had the young man gone out converted to God, there would have been hope next to certainty in his case.

August 13. This afternoon I had a long conversation with a young man only twenty years of age. His case is an interesting one in a philosophical point of view. His father and mother were both drunkards. They lived only to quarrel and get drunk. This child was a villain from his very birth. All the passions and appetites of his parents were transmitted entire to him. At the early age of nine, his vicious disposition began not only to blossom, but to bear its most deadly fruit. About that time his parents separated from each other, throwing him and four other children upon the fortunes and chances of a changeful world. But there was hardly any chance or doubt in the career of such a son. His course was almost marked out by nature from his cradle to these or some other prison walls. He has been a very bad boy for the six years past. Recently, however, he seems to have been improving. By accident we have discovered that he has secretly begun a life of prayer. On my first visit to him after I received this intelligence, I found

him in great distress of mind. He was as ignorant of the Bible, of religion, and of every thing connected with it, as any heathen in the world, excepting that he knew the name of God and of his Savior, and had some idea of the use and efficacy of prayer. I have labored hard to instruct him, and begin to entertain some hope that he will ultimately be a religious man. Simultaneously with his religious feelings arose an interest for his father's family in his hitherto unfeeling heart. He now seems anxious to learn the condition of his brothers and sisters. He has not heard a word from them since he has been in prison. He wept bitterly when he spoke of them. He has but a few more months to stay, and in our conversation he wished me to give him candid and faithful advice respecting his future course. I marked out for him a plain and straight-forward road. "Your first work," said I, "is to seek the kingdom of God in the salvation of your soul. Next, you must resolve that, with the help of God, you will never touch another drop of ardent spirits in your life. Then you must for ever abstain from associating with improper company. Take this road," said I, with all the emphasis of manner I could use, "and you will be safe. If you do not, but suffer yourself to float on according to this world's wind and tide, you will soon be back again to this gloomy mansion, or fall into a drunkard's grave. Go, now," I added, "and hunt up your father's scattered family. Bring them together; be a light and a comfort to your parents; help your brothers and sisters by your counsel and example; be yourself a good citizen, a faithful Christian, and an honest and a happy man." With this advice I left him to complete the duties of the day.

August 14. We buried, this day, a young man who was sent here for horse-stealing. He had suffered much, both in mind and body; but, by the blessing of God upon his penitent soul, he died in great peace. His last words were: "O appy, happy, happy; all things look beautiful before me!"

Saturday, August 15. Another prisoner's time expired to-day. We dressed him in proper order and led him to the outer gate. There he sat, poor fellow! a long time before we could get him to go away. He said he knew not where to go; that he was afraid to enter again into the busy world; that the infamy of having been a convict was a greater burden than he could bear; that his long confinement had taken from him all his ambition, and all his knowledge of the affairs of life, leaving him as ignorant and as helpless as a child. Sitting there upon the cold stones, speaking such words as these, with the tears falling freely from his pallid face, he looked pitiful indeed! Would it not be well, if, in every place where our prisons are located, there were societies, with branches in other cities, whose object should be to take these poor outcasts by the hand, furnish them places of employment, give them a good word of encouragement, and send them along their way with a better prospect of an innocent, and prosperous, and happy life? From personal knowledge of the subject, I am bound to express a fear, that the majority of those who go out from our penitentiaries are no better prepared to live rightly, or more likely to do so, than when they entered; and many, very many, as I know full well, run headlong into their former sins, or into worse vices, the moment they are free. Would not such a society as I have recommended be able to save some from such a course? I leave the suggestion to the wisdom and benevolence of those whose heads are competent, and whose hearts are ready, to accomplish such a work.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A colored man released—Funeral Sermon—A counterfeiter—Besetting sin—Kindness—Convict's story—Dark depravity—Conviction for sin—Two prisoners discharged—A natural liar—Phrenology—Warning to youth—The warden sick—Anxiety for his recovery—The law of love—Letter from a son to his father—Letter from Kentucky—Lost watch returned—An illustration.

Sunday, August 16. This morning the time of a poor colored man was out. Some time since he was caught in the machinery of one of the shops, and crippled for life During the last year he has spent his time in the hospital, reading and studying with great zeal. He has made fine progress. He has become quite a good reader, writes well, understands something of arithmetic, and has made some proficiency in language and history. Nearly all of this advancement has been made within a single year. I think him now tolerably qualified to keep a colored school. This is the business into which he hopes to enter. As he lives, when at home, in a distant state, he was indebted to the private charity of the good warden for the means of getting home. He parted from us with many tears.

At eleven o'clock I preached a funeral sermon for the two prisoners who died last week. My text was in Matthew xxiv, 44: "Therefore, be ye also ready; for in such an hour as ye think not the Son of man cometh." To a company of hearers so ignorant of religion my discourses are necessarily simple. On this occasion my course was the following:

I. Who is the Son of man?

II. What is he coming to do?

III. What, if any thing, have we to do, in order to be ready for his coming?

After the services were closed a prisoner came to me, evidently in great distress. With much agitation he re-

quested me, as soon as convenient, to call at his cell. I took his name and number, and promised to see him soon.

In the afternoon of Monday I sent for him to visit me at my room. He made a full confession of a species of disobedience, which, it seems, is the result of a besetting sin. There is something quite singular in his case. It clearly illustrates the power of habit. He came to the prison for counterfeiting; and it seems, according to his confession, he has practiced writing notes to the prisoners, but in so many different hands, that he could not be detected. He is one of the best penmen living. He counterfeits any style of penmanship, or the hand of any writer, with wonderful rapidity and perfection. His history is an apt comment upon his genius and character. At the first he was sent here for five years. He was pardoned out, and received his discharge, but came back again, in a few months, for a period of ten years. After serving five years he was pardoned and dismissed; but, before reaching home, not more than one hundred and fifty miles away, he was the third time apprehended for the same offense, and committed for twenty-seven years. Ten and a half of these years are gone; the sixteen and a half remaining are before him; but still counterfeiting is his passion, and nothing can get it out of him. He has been whipped severely and frequently, in other days, for creating suspicion of other prisoners, by imitating their hands; and his present fear is, that, having been guilty of a recent transgression of this nature, he will be soundly flogged. He pleaded with me to use my influence in his behalf. I told him he must expect to be punished, but that he now had a merciful warden. I assured him, also, that could I be satisfied of his strong determination never to offend in this way again, I would exert myself in his favor. "Our object," said I, referring to the officers of the prison, "is to prove to the prisoners,

that we are not their enemies, but their friends; that we are willing to make personal sacrifices for their good; and that the great aim of all is to send them from the prison good and true men. Our only law of action, when we have our own way, is the law of kindness; but, if kindness will not do the work, the whip, the shower, the small allowance must be employed." He wept bitterly, and seemed to be heartily sorry for his offense. He faithfully promised me never to transgress in this way again. He and his accuser were then brought face to face; but the ample confessions of the poor culprit superseded the necessity of examination. The warden came in, and talked a long time to the offending prisoner, who trembled at every word, expecting the next thing would be the terrific whip; and his astonishment rose suddenly, and as rapidly ran over to a sort of wild gratitude, when the warden asked him only his pledge of honor never to do the like again. The pledge was frankly given; and I sincerely believe that he is much less likely to offend, in this manner, than he ever was before. This thing called human kindness, which is only another name for that love of our neighbor so cardinal in the religion of the Bible, has an untold, and, I may perhaps say, an untried power. Govern a man as you would a dog, and it is not long before you make a dog of him, so far as you and he are concerned. Govern him as you would a man, and he becomes a man, sooner and more certainly than any will believe, who have not made the experiment.

Tuesday. Nothing of importance occurred to-day.

Wednesday. This afternoon a guard sent me word, that a certain prisoner wished to see me.

Thursday. This morning I sent for the man before referred to; and he came, with a pale countenance and an embarrassed manner.

"Well, my friend," said I to him, as he took a seat, "what do you wish to say to me?"

"I wish to tell you my history, my present condition, and then ask your advice, as to what I ought to do," replied the prisoner.

"Very well," said I; "nothing suits me better. Go on, and take your own time. I am in no hurry; and if I can give you any advice worth giving, when you get through, I will." The convict then began:

"I was born in a distant state. My mother left my father when I was three years old. She ran away, I am told, with another man. My father soon abandoned me and the other children to the mercy of the world. He had been a drunkard for several years. Being so entirely helpless, I was provided for, if my lot can be called a provision, by the authorities of the town. I was put into the hands of one of the most abandoned families in the place, to be fed till I should arrive at a certain age, and then was turned loose upon mankind. One necessity after another kept me driving about, from place to place, but always moving in the lowest company. When old enough to drive a team, I made my way to the canal of my native state, where I soon found work. Here I grew worse and worse. Drinking, swearing, stealing, soon became my daily business. Next I got a berth on a steamboat as cook. Soon after I enlisted in a band of thieves, and practiced the business three years, with various success; but at last, in a drunken frolic, I committed the crime which sent me to this dismal place. I had not been here long before I was powerfully tempted to take my own life, and secreted an instrument for the purpose. Changing my mind, I resolved to spare my own life, but to kill my guard, and so make my escape. This purpose, like the other, gradually died away in my mind. Next I began to think of my character and condition in the world. This sort of reflection has prevailed with me ever since; and now, father Finley, I come before you a most wretched man. I have been a great blasphemer. I fear I have

committed the unpardonable sin. The Bible, lying on my shelf, I have hated, and would have thrown away, long since, could I have done it. I have hated religion, hated goodness, hated right, hated man, and even hated God. Your preaching, let me tell you honestly, has not done me good. I have felt worse and worse under it for the last three months; that is, my mind has been more distressed, more confused, more awfully sad. Seeing this is the case, I thought if you only knew it, you would try to do me good; because I do not think you intended to do me any harm. I look upon you as a minister of God; and now, if there is any comfort for such a fallen, degraded, lost, wretched object as you see in me, for Heaven's sake, tell me where it is. To live as I now am living, carrying such a load as I now carry, is impossible."

"My good friend," said I, smiling through my tears, "I understand your case. The preaching of God's truth has done all this; and I hope it will do more, before it gets through with you."

"If it does," replied the poor fellow, with a profound melancholy look, "I shall sink instantly into hell, for I cannot live in such a state."

"No," said I; "and you won't live in it long, if you will turn to Christ. You are now just coming to your right mind. Look to Jesus to save you, and to save you now, from sinking deeper into this gloomy hell, and he will raise you up."

"Do you believe it?" said the man.

"I know it," was my prompt reply; and I then recited to him the case of the prodigal son, which moved him very much. He wept like a child. I explained to him, as clearly as I could, the way to heaven, and dismissed him, after hearing him say, that he saw things as he had never seen them before, and that he was resolved to seek religion, until he should find rest to his troubled soul. I sent my

blessing after him, as he went out, believing him to stand, bad as he had been, on the very door-steps of the temple of the living God.

Friday. To-day two prisoners were discharged, their time having expired. One of them has been in confinement for twenty-one years. He does not seem to be a wicked or malicious man; but his propensity to lying is remarkable. I know not whether I have ever seen another person, to whom the practice of falsehood appeared so natural, and at the same time so innocent, if such a word is proper. He hardly ever speaks without telling a lie; and yet I have never heard a falsehood from his lips, which, so far as I could discover, was intended to do any harm. He lies, I have sometimes thought, because it is next to impossible for him to tell the truth. He loves a lie; and the secret of that love is not, as I have said, a desire to injure, but a desire to boast. His lying is all based on vanity. He wants to show himself off, as one of the most wonderful men of modern times. The truth would not bear him out in such pretension; and so, his vanity being strong and his respect for truth weak, lying comes as easy as his breath. This, probably, was always so; but habit has increased the facility many-fold. At times he is very religious; and a stranger would draw the inference, from his talk, that he and St. Paul were nearly matched, only the convict will get the better of the apostle, in many of the more wonderful incidents of itinerant life. When he was about leaving, he wished me to give him a certificate of membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church, saying that he intended to serve God the rest of his days; and I thought, from some part of his conversation, that he had an eye even to the holy ministry. I then told him plainly, fearing his intentions to be bad, that, if he would go out and keep out for one whole year, I would give him a certificate to that effect. He looked rather crest-fallen, and went his way;

but he will be back soon, either to this or some other prison.

Some phrenologists have said of this fellow, that he was born with the lying bump upon him, and that he will always be a liar, as he always has been one, because he cannot help it. If he really cannot help it, then he is not accountable; and if *he* is not accountable, by reason of his bumps, no man is accountable, for we all have our bumps. The devil himself knows too much to be the author of such a doctrine. It is the child of phrenology.

The truth is, this man's lying is a habit, formed in early youth. He began life in the lowest sort of company. His parents were miserable, vicious, dishonest people. His companions were of the same stamp, from youth to manhood; and, ever since, he has associated with none but villains. That is his history, and that history is the sufficient explanation of his habit.

His example furnishes a warning to all the youth of our country. Let them take fair warning from it. Let them be careful of the company they keep. Let them be careful of their first falsehoods. Let them learn to reverence the truth, and keep it at all hazards. How noble it is, always to stand by the truth, whether it be for us or against us! What a dignity there is in that young man whose lips always speak precisely what he thinks, and who thinks only how he may speak the truth! Such a person has more influence in the world than wealth, or station, or any of fortune's gifts could furnish him. Lying, on the contrary, is the first step to stealing; stealing leads to other crimes; and these will, in the end, be sure to lead to a prison or the scaffold.

Lying, it is said, is the besetting sin of youth. Children learn to tell falsehoods at a very early age; and there is no part of their education which demands or requires such prompt attention from teachers and parents. I have now

no rules to lay down respecting the right mode of preventing or curing this dangerous vice; but I will say, that, from my experience with these abandoned criminals, that parent who disregards the first development of a false disposition in his child is nourishing a seed that may, in after years, bear him much bitter fruit. Cut down the sprouting scion, and that to the very root, cost what it may; for in so doing you are saving a son or a daughter from the penitentiary, and perhaps a soul from death. "Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and *speaketh the truth in his heart.*"

Saturday. Our incomparable warden has been confined for several days with a bilious fever. The disease comes in its worst form. We have many fears for his life. A gloom spreads over every face; and these dark walls have gathered from his illness an additional blackness. Never was an officer more beloved by all associated with him. The guard, the contractors, all employed on the premises agree in regarding him a most excellent and useful man; and the prisoners almost worship the places where he sets his feet. His wish is stronger, to many of them, to most of them, than any law. When Colonel Dewey came to his present post, it was the prevailing opinion in the community, that there was no way to govern such a congregation of outlaws, but to knock, and beat, and whip them into a trembling fear of every officer, so that they would shudder and shrink, at the appearance of a guard, as they would at the approach of death. Fear, in a word, was supposed to be the only weapon for keeping them in any degree of subjection. What will all your persuasions, and kindness, and moral motives do, it was asked, with a class of men who are given over to every species of iniquity—who are hardened against every good—who are unmanageable, even by the strongest threatenings

and penalties of the law? I remember, too, when the new warden came to the city, and it was rumored that he did not believe and would not practice this doctrine, some turned up their heads, as if to say, "Well, he'll know something, by and by." True, indeed, he does, and he did before; and now we all know something, from the successful demonstration he has made. We know that the worst of men are men; that, if treated as men, they improve from day to day; and that the sweet spirit of our religion, the spirit of undying love, is able to soften and even melt the very hardest hearts. Never was the discipline of the penitentiary of Ohio in so sound, so healthy, so triumphant a condition; and yet never, perhaps, was the doctrine of Christian kindness more completely carried out. I have before related several facts. I shall relate more before this volume closes; but a whole volume, on this single topic, could never tell the powerful effects which I have seen myself, coming from our warden's judicious application of the great and Godlike law of love.

In presenting the reader with the following letter from a prisoner to his father, I feel bound to say, that not only the personal allusions of this communication, but of all that I have given or may give, so far as they refer to me, should be all handed over to the credit of our warden. I am often made the messenger of his mercies; and we all so much represent his feelings, and feel the influence of his spirit, that he may be regarded as the soul of every one of us. It is a joy to me, and I never can be sufficiently thankful, that his heart is so full of the true spirit of that Master whose servant I am, in my present labors:

"*Penitentiary of Ohio, August* 9, 1846.

"Dear Father,—Far as I have gone down the hill of adversity—deep as I have plunged into the depths of iniquity, I have not gone, it seems, thank Heaven! beyond the reach of my father's tender mercies. Though even the

tenderest mercies of man are said not to hold a very high reputation among things of excellence, yet a parent's love is one of the dearest gifts, or blessings, of this life. So, then, low, and depraved, and destitute as I am, it seems that I yet possess the most valuable jewel which this world can give. Instead of treating me with harshness, as I deserve to be treated, my sins, the injury I have committed upon your peace and welfare, all my past life, bad as it is, you have generously, mercifully, unexpectedly forgiven; and, as if to fill me with greater horror of myself, you are even solicitous how you can still help me. My dear father, break not my poor heart with such unmerited kindness. I am not worthy of it. Forget me, rather, and let me bear up my own burden; or, if it must be that I have the torture and the joy of your continued kindness, give me your blessing, but do not give yourself farther trouble about such a wretch as I am. O my dear, kind, loving father! I cannot say what I wish to say. What I have written does not express my meaning. No; my meaning is too deep for words. It is a heaven to me—a heaven, beaming amid the very fires of my present hell—to know that I am still remembered, loved, cared for, by him from whom I date my being. Your solicitude rouses every feeling of my better nature. It has brought to life the little that is good within me. Till this day I did not think—such was my awful state—that I had one right affection left; but your letter has struck a chord that still vibrates. O what a life have I lived! How inexpressibly low have I fallen! How my whole soul has been demoralized, bereft, impoverished by vice! You know nothing of it, father; and God grant you never may know what it is to be, for one moment, what I have been for years, and all the time dreaming that I was enjoying happiness! You speak of my returning home. My dear father, you do not know what you are proposing. Would you take a wolf, a tiger into your family? Do you wish your *good* sons and daugh-

ters—I *cannot* say my brothers and sisters, for I am unworthy—do you wish to see these associating familiarly with such a monster as I have grown to be? And could I live in their company, and be shunned by them? No, father, kind father—too kind. My sins rise like mountains between me and such happiness. Home! You ask if I think of it. O God! what shall I say? Was I not once a child—an innocent child—a happy child—the child of my father's and my mother's love? Was the earth not green around me? Were not the school, the play-grounds, the family fireside, and all the little nooks of our peaceful home, as full of childish innocence and joy to me as to my brothers and sisters, or to the best boy in that lovely vale? Can I forget them, the only bright spots in memory's page? I can say no more, father. My heart will burst, if I write another word of home—my once bright, happy, sweet home. Let me stop, and weep a moment, before I proceed further in my present task.

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"The books you sent me are welcome. I shall read them all through. We have a good library here; but what volumes can compare, even were they embossed with gold, with *books from home?*

"Our warden is one of the best of men. We have also a good physician, who is not only a skillful, but a kind and Christian man. But our moral physician, our venerable chaplain, is the life of all. He is the friend, and father, and counselor of every one. He has laid out a great work, and is succeeding in it beyond the anticipations of the most sanguine. He labors with untiring diligence. Some of the most distinguished of our visitors here have said, as I am told, that if he accomplishes what he has undertaken, he will do what the world never saw before. His ambition seems to be, as nearly as I can tell from his sermons, to turn the penitentiary into something like a church; for he is

constantly telling us, that he shall never be at rest, till he sees every man a servant of the Lord. He goes into the shops, and takes the most hardened man by the hand; and in a few minutes he has him weeping like a little child. Nobody can stand before him. He carries every thing by his mild, firm, persuasive, touching manner of speaking. It seems to me that he will be able to do every thing he desires. He is opposed to all severity, though, he says, the rules of the prison must be punctually obeyed. He often says—and he has said it so often as to put it into every one's mouth—that 'order is Heaven's first law.' Still, he says that order can be maintained by kindness; and the spirit he breathes has become, to a great extent, the spirit of every man in prison. But he has a great work to do, before all is done. I mention these things, dear father, that you may see that we are cared for by our rulers here.

"I close by saying, that, if we are never permitted to meet on earth, I hope and trust, dear father, we may meet in a better world!

"Your son, J. P."

This afternoon I received a letter from Paducah, Ky., from the postmaster of that place, in relation to the gold watch referred to on a previous page. The reader will remember, that a prisoner, being under strong conviction for his sins, could not rest till he made the disclosure of having stolen the watch; but he did not know who was the owner of it. It was left by him in the possession of a friend. I had found the watch; and now, by this letter, I obtained satisfactory information of the owner. The letter described, accurately, all the circumstances, gave the name of the owner, his residence, the appearance of the watch when it was taken, and every thing else so perfectly, that there could be no doubt as to the identification; and, therefore, I went to the person having possession of the watch, obtained it, carefully wrapped it up, and sent it, by the

hands of a trusty messenger, to its rightful owner. He now has it. After having, for several years, regarded it as lost, it has returned to him again, in this curious way; and though *he* may not be deeply impressed with the powerful testimony that watch brings to him, respecting the reality of our holy religion, *I* know that it would have never shown him the time of day again, had it not been for the influence of the Gospel on the trembling convict's mind. That convict was sincerely seeking the favor of God and the pardon of his sins. He came to a point where it was as clear as a sunbeam to him, that there was no hope in his case, till he should make restitution to those he had injured; and, after looking his whole life over, this affair of the watch was the only one in which he had the chance to perform this duty. With alacrity he seized upon this sole opportunity of showing to God the sincerity of his heart; and the result is as I have stated. The fortunate owner, every time he takes out his watch, by night or by day, holds before him a demonstration of the power of the word of God.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Sabbath—Numerous visitors—Ohio annual conference—Personal illness—A. J. Hamilton—His early life—Business tact—Trip to Havana—Establishment of a circus—Strange courtship—Return to New York—Speculation—Great loss—Trip to Caracas—Contract with the governor of Venezuela—Various schemes—Robbery of a store at Xenia—Detection—Trial—Confinement—Prison life—His death—Letter to the sheriff of Green county, and his counsel—Second letter to the sheriff.

The holy Sabbath dawned once more in beauty upon this lovely world. The day was spent in the usual course of duties. We had a large number of visitors from the city and country. Many tears were shed; and I hope much good was done.

Monday, August 24. This day I leave Columbus for Piqua, the seat of the Ohio annual conference for the current year. I entertain hopes that the trip will prove beneficial to me.

Tuesday finds me sick at my family residence in Eaton.

Wednesday, I am still confined. My complaint is fever.

Thursday, I am no better.

Friday, the disease seems to be slightly abating.

Saturday, I am getting still better. As I recover, my mind returns often to my interesting charge; and to-day I have been pondering on the case of that wonderful man, A. J. Hamilton, whose career has awakened so much interest throughout the country. As I am to be gone from my regular work for a week longer, where the reader might feel no special interest to follow me, I will here put into his hands an authentic account of that remarkable individual, drawn up at my request by my friend ——, and revised and abridged by the editor of this volume. There is, perhaps, no name on record, in the entire criminal history of the country, whose fame has been more widely circulated.

The following is all, probably, that will ever go down to posterity concerning him:

Alexander Jay Hamilton was born in Charleston, South Carolina, in 1813. His father was a mechanic, and carried on the business of carriage-making. His circumstances were moderately prosperous, such as is generally understood by the phrase of "well to do in the world." His mother's maiden name was Jay, a descendant of the same family of Judge Jay, a distinguished jurist and statesman, who negotiated the treaty with Great Britain, in 1783, known as Jay's treaty, and which was the subject of much comment among the politicians of the time.

A. J. Hamilton received no other education than such as could be obtained at a common school, and his acquirements were limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic. At the age of fourteen, while amusing himself in his father's shop, he accidentally wounded his knee with a drawing-knife, verifying the oft-repeated proverb, that "children should not play with edge tools." The wound did not heal readily; and becoming feeble and puny, he was placed in an apothecary's shop, where he remained two years. "Culling of simples" was a business not at all congenial to his taste; and he could say with truth, as the boy said in the play, who aspired to histrionic honors, "What! make an apothecary's apprentice of me—cramp my genius over a pestle and mortar!" At the age of sixteen he lost his father, and his mother removed to the state of New York, her native state, in which she resided when first married.

She obtained a situation for her son in a dry-goods store, in the city of New York, in which he spent several years, devoting all his energies to make himself a good salesman, an accomplished clerk, and a first-rate theoretical and practical book-keeper. This business enabled him, by constant practice, to strengthen his perceptive faculties, with which he had been liberally endowed by nature, and, like Cassius

to become "a great observer, and look quite through the deeds of other men," and to acquire readiness and accuracy in judging characters, and tact and address in rendering himself agreeable and in inspiring confidence.

Such were his abilities, that, after having been employed in several different retail stores, he succeeded in obtaining a situation in a wholesale establishment and importing house doing an immensely-extensive business. And in this store or one of a similar kind, he continued to find employment as long as he remained in the city of New York. No better evidence need be given to show the estimation in which his services were held, than the fact of his salary being gradually increased until it amounted to fifteen hundred dollars per annum. Besides his other duties as clerk, he had to notice the arrivals of merchants from the interior and western states, contrive to introduce himself to each one as soon as he arrived, invite him to his room, act as *cicerone* in showing him the wonders of that great London of American cities, such as the City Hall, Tombs, Battery, Castle Garden, Niblo's, etc., taking him to the theatre, and not unfrequently treating him to an elegant supper at Delmenico's or some other fashionable restaurat. His engaging address, friendly manners, polite attentions, and hospitable entertainment, never failed of inspiring reciprocal feelings of friendly regard, and of obtaining the confidence of the person to whom he sought to attach himself—more especially if the person happened to be a stranger unacquainted with city life. There is no place in the world where a person feels more lonely, friendless, and insignificant, than he does when for the first time he finds himself in the crowded thoroughfares of a great city. He feels that he is a mere atom floating on the tide of life—a human animalcule in the great ocean of existence—that if he were instantly swallowed up and should disappear for ever, not one being of the mighty throng would miss his presence or

regret his loss. He realizes the feeling of loneliness so beautifully expressed by Byron:

"But midst the shock, the hum, the crowd of men,
To hear, to feel, to see, and to possess,
And roam along, the world's tired denizen,
With none to bless us, none whom we can bless—
* * * * * *
This is to be alone—this, *this is* solitude."

Hamilton's attentions to such as were strangers generally paid well, and resulted in taking them to the store of his employers, and selling them thousands of dollars' worth of goods, gaining their good-will, and securing their future custom.

No matter for what pursuit in life a boy is intended, a few months as clerk in a store is time well occupied. He may there acquire a training which will be useful to him in every pursuit he may be engaged in as long as he lives. He may learn to be methodical, ready in mental arithmetic, well versed in book-keeping and accounts, with the important lesson grounded in his mind of not permitting the expenditures to overrun the income, a practice which has ruined so many thousands. It impresses on the mind the immense value of character for honesty and integrity. It is a school for exercising courtesy, patience, and forbearance—of learning, by constant practice, to control passions and subdue feelings of rising anger—of becoming a good judge of character—of practicing the art of pleasing, and of keeping a habitually-pleasant expression of countenance, which latter is of much more importance than many might suppose. A cheerful, frank, pleasant expression of countenance, with eyes beaming with good-humor and amiability, make more in one's favor than a letter of recommendation; and, like all our other faculties, may be improved and increased by constant practice. The noted Aaron Burr—than whom few men had a deeper insight of human nature, or could more successfully practice those blandish-

ments which captivate and win the regard of others—in a letter to his darling daughter, Theodosia, gives the following advice: "There is nothing more certain than that you may form what countenance you please. An open, serene, intelligent countenance, a little brightened by cheerfulness, not wrought into smiles and simpers, will pleasantly become familiar and grow into habit. A year will certainly accomplish it. Avoid, for ever avoid, a smile or sneer of contempt; never even mimic them."

But to return to the subject of this sketch. While employed in wholesale houses he was sent on several collecting tours, which gave him a chance of observing the manners and customs of the people of the western states; and such was his versatility of talent that he could adapt himself to any sort of people, and make himself agreeable and apparently at home amongst every variety of company that chance threw in his way.

When the rage for speculating in lands broke out in 1834, he caught the spirit, and embarked in it with zeal. He visited the west as agent for a company of land speculators, in which he also had an interest. He selected and entered several thousand acres of land, and was concerned in laying out a town at the mouth of Rock river, which was named Rock Island City. He returned to New York to give an account of his agency, and soon after left to seek his fortune in the south. He was one of those men who are never so happy as when exercising their locomotive powers, who delight in a succession of new and varied scenery and objects, and retain vivid and unusually-strong impressions and recollections of every thing which falls under their observation. To speak phrenologically, he was endowed with immense locality. He passed through Ohio by way of Columbus, Dayton, and Cincinnati. From thence he descended the river to New Orleans; and from there made a flying visit to Texas—his keen eye always on the

look-out for some business or enterprise in which to embark for the purpose of bettering his fortune. Returning again to New Orleans he formed a partnership with a Jew, the object of which was to take a venture of goods to Texas. An arrangement was made and a stock of goods purchased, a part of them on credit, for which the note of the firm was given. But before they started for the land of promise to realize their golden dreams, Hamilton suddenly changed his notion, and concluded to abandon the enterprise and go to Havana. A dissolution of partnership was proposed and agreed to—he settling his share of the firm debt with his quondam associate, who assumed its responsibility, and engaged a passage to Havana. On the morning on which the vessel sailed in which he was to make the voyage, he went to the lodgings of his late partner to procure the papers necessary to show in what manner they had settled, and of his having paid his share of the firm debt. The person he sought was not at home; the vessel was about sailing, and no time must be lost. And so, with some misgivings on the subject, but hoping his partner would prove himself an honest man and comply with his agreement, he embarked on his voyage to Cuba, and in a short time arrived at Havana. As the vessel entered the harbor, he was forcibly impressed with the extraordinary strength of the defenses, and the spaciousness of the harbor, capable of containing more than one thousand vessels, yet with an entrance so narrow that only one ship could enter at a time. The Moro castle, elevated on a rock, with its lofty parapets, impregnable walls, bomb-proof covered way, and deep ditch hewn in the solid rock, with its numerous embrasures for heavy artillery, seemed to frown defiance at the approach of an enemy, which, in the narrow channel, never could withstand the numerous and formidable guns of this castle; and, as if this was not sufficient, there stands the Cavagna, or Puntal, and other forts, capable of pouring an iron

tempest, enough to destroy and sink the strongest ships which ever floated on the ocean. The city, with its forts, dock-yard, magnificent houses built of stone, lazaretto, hospitals, and numerous, lofty church-steeples, together with the immense quantity of shipping in the harbor, made a splendid panorama, and filled him with admiration at its grandeur and novelty, and excited his curiosity for a closer inspection and examination.

Having procured lodging, Hamilton concluded to spend some time in examining the place, studying the Spanish language, and making himself acquainted with the manners and customs of the people. He visited places of public amusement, such as fandangoes, theatres, masquerades, etc., the latter of which afforded him a subject for observation, and from which he derived much amusement. While attending one, at which he wore a domino, he paid considerable attention to a Spanish lady, in a mask, of faultless form and graceful manners; but all his art and address failed to induce her to unmask, though he set her the example. He had no doubt but she was one of the *haut ton*—perhaps the accomplished and wealthy heiress of some grandee, a descendant from those who conquered the island. The idea of making a fortune by marrying a Spanish beauty was not unthought of—an achievement much more difficult than he at first supposed, from the pride and exclusiveness of parents of Castilian descent, and the vigilance with which daughters are watched and guarded by parents, guardians, and duennas.

After remaining some time, engaged as has been stated, and also on the look-out for some profitable business or employment, he chartered a schooner, freighted her with fruit, took command of her himself, and sailed for New Orleans. The voyage was prosperous, and the venture profitable, as he disposed of his cargo readily at a handsome profit. He returned to Havana with a cargo of flour and

western produce, and did well with that also. He continued in this business two years, changing the vessel once in the meantime. While engaged in this trade he executed several special commissions for citizens of Havana. Amongst others he ingratiated himself very much with an old nobleman, who considered it beneath his dignity to ride a gelding, and for whose special use he purchased at New Orleans and took over to Havana *une cabello entero*. Notwithstanding his voyages were confined entirely to the Gulf, he acquired some practical knowledge of navigation, and enlarged his views about commerce. His next enterprise was to visit Key West, for the purpose of trading and speculating on wrecked or damaged goods. But little was done in that line, and he soon returned to Havana.

Some of the wealthy citizens of the place, while on a visit to New York, had been much pleased to witness the plays of Mazeppa and Timour the Tartar performed in the theatre, and expressed a desire to see the same plays performed in the theatre in Havana. He determined to make the experiment, though aware that it would be attended with immense expense and responsibility. Whether it would be profitable would depend entirely on how it would take with the play-going public—on what houses they would draw.

His first step was to set a competent person to translating these plays into Spanish, while he sailed to New York, where he chartered a whole company of circus-riders, horses and all, and returned with them to Havana. He rented the great Tacon theatre, said to be the largest in the world, except one at Rome. This theatre was named Tacon after a captain-general of that name, whose administration was of immense benefit to the people, and whose name is still held in grateful remembrance. It forms a striking example to show how much benefit one man may confer upon his fellow-men, when placed in power, if he be good

and wise—endowed with the right qualities of the head and heart—with moral courage and firmness to execute what his judgment dictates.

For some years previous, and at the time of Tacon's arrival, Havana was but little better than a den for thieves and cut-throats. The slave-trade was carried on in an underhand manner, and some of the most prominent citizens shared in its nefarious profits. Pirates were secretly fitted out, and the proceeds of their successful cruises were smuggled in; and citizens, apparently of high standing and respectable family connections, connived at it, and were sharers in their horrid gains. Murders and homicides were of ordinary occurrence. These victims of revenge and avarice were found of mornings in the streets, where they had fallen by the stiletto of the assassin. No effective, energetic efforts were made to detect the perpetrators and to bring them to punishment.

Leo Africanus—a great traveler in his day—visited a city in the western provinces of Morocco, called "El Eusugaghen, the city of murderers." A mere description of the manners of the inhabitants is enough to make one's blood run cold. The city was situated on a lofty mountain, surrounded by no gardens, and shaded by no trees. No person left his own door without being armed with a dagger or a spear, which he was ever ready to use, at a moment's warning or provocation. As soon as Leo opened his court, for the purpose of introducing law amongst them, one man rushed before him, and accused another of murdering eight of his relations, which the defendant admitted, but justified it on the grounds that the complainant had previously murdered ten of his folks, and consequently there were yet two to be avenged or paid for. The killing of the ten was also admitted, and excused or justified as being necessary to obtain his farm, which they had forcibly seized, and unjustly deprived him of.

It is not pretended that Havana could be compared with this city, in wickedness and crime. Still, it was *El Eusugaghen*, the city of many murders. No person could walk the streets after night but at the hazard of his life, particularly if his appearance indicated that he might carry money or other valuables about his person. The stealthy assassin, "with Tarquin's ravishing strides, toward his design moving like a ghost," would dog his steps to some suitable place, where the bright blade of a *cuchillo* would gleam before his eyes, and the next instant be buried in his vitals. So much had they become emboldened by impunity, that crimes were perpetrated in open daylight, an instance of which occurred with three American sea captains, who were walking along the beach, one day, looking for sea shells, in plain view of the city, when all of a sudden they were seen running toward their boats, divested of every article of wearing apparel except their shirts. They had been metamorphosed into literal *sans culottes*, with as much dexterity as a juggler could turn a petticoat. A circle of *ladrones* were formed around them, after the manner of the Phansagars of India, and, screened by this living wall, an active operator in the ring soon turned them out *tout nud*, except their shirts. They were left to scud under bare poles, or with only two sails flying, to their boats.

Many American and other sailors have lost their lives, while their vessels were lying at that port; and the boarding and stealing from vessels, in the night season, was of common occurrence.

There was an occasion where the wrong passenger was waked up. An American captain of a merchantman, then lying at anchor in the bay, was returning to his vessel just after dark, carrying a bag of dollars in his hand. He stepped into a waterman's boat, and directed him to row him out to his vessel, while he took a seat in the stern sheets to steer the boat. When about half way to the

vessel the boatman quietly unshipped his oars, and drawing a long, murderous-looking sheath-knife from the sash round his waist, advanced on the American to murder him. He was a stout, savage, fiercely-mustached, piratical-looking villain, dressed in a check shirt, blue pants without suspenders, with a net, woolen cap, running up to a peak, and surmounted by a red tassel. His appearance answered very well to Byron's description of the Corsair, of whom he said:

> "There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
> Which raised emotions both of rage and fear;
> And where his frown of hatred daily fell,
> Hope withering fled, and Mercy sighed, farewell."

Our American was unarmed. No help was at hand, and instant death awaited him. In this moment of utter helplessness and desperation he pulled convulsively at the rudder. Fortunately, the pintle was loose, and it came off in his hand; and just as the miscreant's arm was raised aloft, to inflict the fatal stab, his skull came in contact with the rudder, with a tremendous crash, which tumbled him into the bottom of the boat, from whence he was instantly ejected overboard. An enormously-large, white-finned shark, which had been sailing about the harbor that evening, on a cruise, upon a roving commission in quest of a supper, happened to be convenient, and was seen to turn up his white belly, in the moonlight, and pay his respects to the villain, in the most affectionate manner. He took him without pepper or mustard.

Such was the state of morals and execution of the laws, when Governor Tacon arrived to assume the discharge of his official duties. Near the centre of the town there is a citadel of great strength, which contains the Captain-General's palace, and where the public treasures and archives are deposited, in which the new Governor took up his quarters. Here, with the household garrison to defend him, if need be, and enforce his commands—backed, if necessary,

by the troops in the Moro castle—he had the whole city, as it were, completely under his thumb. From this place of security he surveyed the field of his operations, and adopted the policy he intended to pursue during his administration. Soon after his arrival a wealthy citizen sent him a present of a fine carriage and a pair of superior match-horses. The new functionary declined accepting the present, dryly remarking that as yet he had not had a chance of doing any thing worthy of so handsome a *bribe*. This looked a little ominous to such as had been setting the laws at defiance, on account of their wealth and ability to bribe the corrupt, pretended administrators of justice. Tacon established his municipal regulations, organized a police, turned out corrupt knaves from office, and filled their places with honest and capable men. Neither high rank, family influence, wealth, nor station were allowed to screen the guilty. "The wicked prize itself could no longer buy out the law." One nobleman—a count—was seen breaking stone to repair the public highway, with a ball and chain to his leg. Libertines and offenders in high life, to whom the laws had been heretofore as Anacharsis, the Scythian philosopher, told Solon his would be, that is, "like spiders' webs, in which small flies may be entangled and caught, but the wasps and hornets—the rich and powerful—would break through and disperse them," were perfectly aghast at the vigor and impartiality with which justice was meted out to all sorts of offenders.

Assassins and felons were hunted out in their dens of infamy and *garoted* to death. Their bodies were left blackening in the sun, at the place of execution, until evening—a warning to all like offenders. In a few months the robbers were either executed, imprisoned, or had fled to some place of greater security, and Havana became one of the most orderly and best governed cities in the world. Any person might walk the streets in perfect security at all hours of the night.

Such were the admirable effects of the administration of that good man and incorruptible officer, in compliment to whom this mammoth theatre had been named. The pit of this theatre was floored over for the performance of the horses, and the play translated and committed. It required numerous rehearsals and much time, patience, and attention, to prepare for a public performance. At length all was ready—bills were put up announcing the strange performance. The rare and novel attractions created quite a sensation among the play-going public, and drew an immense house. Noblemen, grandees of long pedigree and noble descent, were there, as well as the wealthy merchant, and millionaire, and parvenu—and signorets, with bright eyes, and beautiful faces and forms, were there. Never was that immense structure so crowded with beauty, wealth, and fashion. Five thousand dollars were taken in the first night, and the plays had an immense run. The expenses, however, were great in proportion to the receipts, and did not leave as much clear profit as one might suppose from the proceeds of the first night. When the play-going season was over, Hamilton traveled with the circus, which was exhibited in various parts of the island, visiting Matanzas and St. Jago de Cuba. He planned, directed, and managed every thing, even to counting the cash at night taken in for the day's performance. His business talents were so severely tasked as to scarcely leave him time sufficient to sleep. Yet he was equal to every emergency; did every thing well, and made a profitable season, toward the close of which the yellow fever broke out amongst the troupe, some of whom died; and the others becoming alarmed, he chartered a vessel and sent the survivors back to New York.

After this he set on foot a project for another theatre, to be constructed differently from the Tacon. The front was to present a grand and imposing appearance, in a fine style of architecture, with two wings, one for a cafe and ice-cream

saloon, the other for a billiard table. The rear yards of these wings were to be planted with orange, China, and magnolia trees, so as to form a cool, shady, and delightful retreat from the dust and heat of the city. The plan of the edifice was drawn, and it was to be built by a joint-stock company. Part of the stock was taken, when, from some cause not now recollected, the scheme fell through and was abandoned.

While residing in Havana, though devoted to business in the main, yet Hamilton was by no means insensible to the charms of the black-eyed, olive-complected beauties of the capital, which led to divers little romantic adventures, not always unattended with danger. One night, while promenading the grand piazza, a female stepped up to him in a hurried manner, having her face concealed by her *reboso*, and slipped a note into his hand and passed on. The circumstance, with the time and manner, much excited his curiosity, and aroused certain vague, undefinable emotions in his breast. He examined it by the light of a neighboring lamp. It was a small, scented billet, stamped with a cupid, and written in a beautiful Italian hand. The purport of it was, to assure the person to whom it was addressed of unwavering constancy of affection, yet that she had been watched with such vigilance as to put it entirely out of her power to afford him a chance of a personal interview; but that, on the following night, if he would, at a certain hour designated, repair to a place specified, a personal interview would be obtained. He discovered at a glance that it was intended for another, and handed to him through mistake; and to attend the appointment might prove a dangerous business, as, when discovered by the true man, it would be almost certain to cost him his life, as the revenge of a Spaniard, particularly in affairs of love and jealousy, is as remorseless as the grave. On the other hand, his love of adventure, his confidence in his own address and management, united with the hope that he might supplant the favored lover, determined him on attending, and

risking the consequences. The intended adventure so occupied his thoughts, and excited his feelings, that he could not sleep until a late hour; and when he did sleep it was to dream of the unseen beauty, and to wander through a maze of romantic adventure, which ended in marrying a beautiful heiress, and obtaining the forgiveness of the parents, and realizing all his hopes. Then a change came over "the spirit of his dream;" his path was beset with perils on every hand, as "thick as thought could make them." The next day seemed unusually long; the flagging wings of time seemed to move as though they were loaded with lead. At length the appointed hour arrived; and, arrayed in a fashionable suit, being a well-proportioned man, with regular features, an expressive countenance, and keen, piercing eyes, as he surveyed himself in the glass, confidently repeated the lines of Shakspeare:

> "Our doubts are traitors,
> And make us lose the good we oft might win,
> By fearing to attempt."

Buoyant with expectation, and flattered with the hope that fortune had something in store for him, he repaired to the place designated in the note. He found the door open, which he supposed had been left so on purpose for him. He immediately entered and ascended the grand stair-case, at the landing of which he found another room, with the door ajar, through which streamed a faint streak of light. Cautiously entering, instead of a beautiful lady, he saw, by the flickering gleam of an expiring lamp, whose feeble rays were barely sufficient to make darkness visible, O, horrible! the corpse of a murdered man—"of ashy semblance, meagre, pale, and bloodless"—his eyes starting in their sockets, and glazed with the film of death; his countenance distorted into hideousness, on account of the agony and alarm in which he had expired. His throat was cut from ear to ear, the sheets dyed in blood, while open drawers and deranged fur-

niture showed that the murder had been followed by robbery. The sight was so awful, so unexpected, and so different from his expectations, that he stood petrified with horror, while the flickering light made him almost believe the corpse nodded his head, as though motioning him to advance, which made him mentally say, with Macbeth,

> "Thou canst not say I did it: never shake
> Thy gory locks at me."

The imminent danger he was in of being found alone with the corpse, and of having to suffer in place of the murderer himself, flashed through his mind, and rallied his paralyzed energies. He lost no time in gaining the street, with all possible dispatch. A damp was struck upon him, which completely chilled the ardor of his romantic feelings, and he determined to return to his lodgings and to abandon all such enterprises for the future.

He had advanced but a few steps when he felt some person touch his elbow; he turned, and there stood the female messenger who had delivered him the note the previous evening She whispered in his ear that he had mistaken her directions, the residence of her mistress being on the other side of the street, and directed him to follow, which he accordingly did. With much caution, she ushered him into a room on the ground floor, where she directed him to wait until she informed her mistress of his arrival. The room was elegantly finished, and richly furnished. The marble-topped tables, and mahogany sideboard, loaded with glittering plate, and the valuable paintings which decorated the walls, all indicated the owner to be a person of princely wealth and high aristocracy. While making these observations, and conning over a speech abounding in compliments and protestations, the unknown *senorita* entered the room and stood before him, and, casting aside her vail, revealed to him a countenance so transcendently beautiful that all his flowers of rhetoric forsook him, and he stood motionless,

struck dumb with amazement and admiration. She at once discovered he was a stranger, uttered one scream of terror, and sunk in a swoon on the floor. This brought him to his senses. He lifted her fair form and laid her on a sofa, and sprinkling her face with water, succeeded in restoring her to consciousness. On opening her eyes she saw the handsome *Americano del Norte* kneeling before her, and regarding her with looks expressive of tenderness, admiration, pity, and solicitude. Inspired by her beauty, and lustrous black eyes, shaded with their long, silken lashes, he became eloquent in his apologies and expressions of admiration. He informed her that he was a stranger from a distant land, unacquainted with the manners and customs of the place; and though aware that the note had been handed to him through mistake, yet his desire to see her was so excessive that the temptation overcame all other considerations, for which he implored her forgiveness. He managed matters so well, with his prepossessing address, that she not only forgave him, but certain delicate suggestions led him to hope he might supplant the real lover, and occupy his place in the affections of the lovely *senorita*. An arrangement was made for future interviews, to attend which he was "as punctual as a young lover to his first appointment."

He was progressing finely in his suit, in gaining the affections of the lady, when he was much surprised and nonplussed by her informing him that, being a stranger, he must give her one more proof of his love before she could give him her heart and entire confidence. It had been customary for romantic lovers on St. Bartholomew's day to repair, after night, under the windows of their lady loves, disguised in a mask, and slipping down the shirt so as partly to expose the naked back, inflict self-flagellation, until directed to stop by the lady expressing herself satisfied. In such cases it was impossible to play the same deception upon the lady that Sancho did on Don Quixote—who, instead of

flogging his own carcass to disenchant Dulciane, which he made his master believe he was performing vigorously, while he, in the meantime, was applying dapple's halter to the cork trees near by—for in this case the flogging was done under the eye of the lady herself.

The instrument used was made of twisted cord, similar to the *deciplinas* used by Catholics for self-flagellation. The Hon. Waddy Thompson, our Minister to Mexico, picked up one of them one night, soaked with blood, at the door of the church of San Augustine, in which some two hundred Mexicans had been shut up, with their shirts off, inflicting self-castigation, and noticed, as they came out at the door, that they were respectable citizens.

This last proposition of hers was a poser. He was loth to give up such a splendid prize, as the adjutant was to yield the widow Boggs before his after-dinner ride; and as to flogging himself, it was with him "like an old man's falling in love with no stomach." He finally hit upon an expedient which served his purpose admirably. In lieu of the twisted cord formed of hemp, or raw hide, he substituted one formed of twisted strips of cloth, of the ordinary size and color of those in common use; and in lieu of the leather lashes at the end, he used small eel skins filled with blood. Thus provided he repaired to her window, and having first punctured the eel skins with a pin, he commenced the work of self-flagellation with zeal, and apparently great effect; for, at every blow, the blood spirted out of the eel skins, covering his back with gore. The lady was horror-stricken at the sight, implored him to stop, "*per el amor del sancta Maria,*" (for the love of the holy Virgin,) and reproached herself with ever having required such a test, and that she was more than satisfied. Yielding to her earnest request, he desisted; and as he retired, laughing in his sleeve at the success of his *ruse,* he heard her utter, in accents of love and compassion, "*Care mie pobracco!*"

From this time on he became the unrivaled and accepted lover. She was an orphan, who had been raised by a proud old uncle, who could trace back his pedigree to the conquest of the island in 1511, and who was proud, haughty, jealous of the honor of the family, and irascible. He proved to be the identical old *hidalgo* whose good-will he had obtained by importing for him that same *cabello entero;* and, though he treated him with civility and kindness, he entertained no more idea of his daring to aspire to the hand of his niece, than he had of his becoming king of the whole island, and would have spurned the idea and scouted such a proposal with intense wrath and fury—would have either sacrificed him to his vengeance and insulted honor, or shut up his niece in a convent,

> "To be a barren sister all her life,
> For aye in shady cloister mewed."

And, unfortunately, the possession of her fortune depended upon her marrying with her uncle's consent and approbation. It was now he experienced the truth of the oft-repeated lines—

> "The course of true love never did run smooth:
> But either it was different in blood,
> Or else misgrafted in respect of years,
> Or else it stood upon the choice of friends."

In this case it stood upon the choice of one who, from his nature and pride, would be deaf to all entreaty, or "as unrelenting flint to drops of rain." Nor had he the most distant idea that Hamilton had ever seen his niece, or had the audacious presumption to aspire to her hand. Here was a dilemma so embarrassing, perplexing, and distressing, as to baffle all his ingenuity and contrivance, fertile as his mind was in expedients and resources. He could elope with the *dama* (lady) and escape to the United States, but he did not relish the idea of losing her fortune. He preferred love in a fine house with plenty, to love in a

cottage with little. He was not as mercenary as Hudibras, who, in his courtship to the widow, was frank enough to declare,

> "Nor is it your person
> My stomach's set so sharp and fierce on;
> But 'tis your better part, your riches,
> That my enamored heart bewitches."

Still, like old Trap Boise, he was fond of a con-sid-er-a-tion The truth is, he wanted the lady and her fortune too.

While he was racking his brains for some feasible scheme by which to accomplish the cherished object of his heart's desire, every private interview had become more difficult, as a duenna had been placed over her, who was as vigilant in the discharge of her duty "as a cat to steal cream." There was danger of their being discovered, as all depended upon the fidelity and discretion of her *doncella* (maid)—the one who first delivered him the note. While he was planning in vain, and they were at their stolen interviews, mutually consoling each other, or striving to do so, with the hope that something favorable might turn up, Don Diego Dablesteen, her former and now discarded lover, returned. He had been on a visit to a hacienda he owned in Yucatan, not far from Merida. He soon discovered, that while gone on his voyage he had sailed into the northern latitude of the affections of his intended *esposa* (wife.) He determined to find out his successful rival, and sacrifice him to his vengeance. Like Aufidius to Coriolanus, he vowed that

> "Nor sleep, nor sanctuary,
> Being naked, sick; nor fane, nor capitol,
> The prayers of priests, nor times of sacrifice,
> ——————should lift up
> Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst,"

his deadly vengeance. For this purpose he applied to the *doncella*, whose fidelity was not proof against his entreaties and bribes, of which he was profusely liberal.

Having learned from her who his rival was, he instituted

some inquiry, which resulted in learning that his successful competitor for the hand and fortune of a splendid lady of high family, was nothing more than a mere adventurer—a skipper of a schooner and manager of a circus, without family or fortune. Had his rival been a *hidalgo* (gentleman) he intended to have sent him a challenge, and settled the claims to the lady by the duello. It added ten-fold to his pangs of rage, jealousy, and mortified pride, when he reflected that it was neither a man of rank nor of fortune who had been his successful rival, but an unknown and nameless adventurer. He determined to communicate the secret to the old uncle, who received it as he would the sting of a tarantula. He had not previously opposed Dablesteen's union with his *sabrina* (niece) on account of his family or fortune—for both were unexceptionable—but on account of his debauchery and unbridled libertinism—one who was not fit to be trusted with her happiness. Still, such was his family pride and aristocracy of feeling, he would have preferred him a thousand times over to a stranger man—the skipper of a trading vessel. Poor Hamilton's fate was decided on at the first interview. It was determined he should fall by Dablesteen's own hand, to make sure work of it. The stain he was striving to put upon the family, by seeking to unite himself with it in marriage, nothing short of his heart's blood could wash away. After which the niece should be shut up in a convent, until, at least, she should come to her reason. Having ascertained from the treacherous *doncella* when the next interview would take place, he took his station near the premises, where he remained, like a tiger in a jungle, waiting for his prey; and when he saw the dim outline of a man glide under the arch of the *port cochere* and disappear in the darkness, ten thousand furies raged in his bosom. Every moment seemed an age until he saw the same figure emerge from the gateway. Following it with the stealthy tread of a wolf a short

distance, he drove his dagger to its heart, as he thought; and such would have been the case, had not its keen point encountered a well-filled pocket-book in a side pocket, through which it pierced until it came in contact with a miniature of the beautiful senorita set in a gold locket. The blow was given with such force as to stagger Hamilton. He always carried under his vest, when he went out, a *punal*, or dagger, a small weapon with an ivory handle, the blade not exceeding six inches in length, with three edges, strong and as sharp at the point as a glover's needle. It was easily concealed, and made no formidable appearance like a bowie-knife. Nevertheless, it was a terribly-dangerous weapon at close quarters, and well adapted to the purpose of tapping hearts, veins, and arteries. He was a man of quick observation and action, united to presence of mind and courage; and before Dablesteen could disengage his weapon and repeat the blow, Hamilton's punal had pierced his heart, and he fell mortally wounded. As he lay in the agonies of death, his eyes glared at Hamilton with an expression of malice, disappointed revenge, and baffled hopes, more diabolical than any thing he had ever imagined. This ended his last love adventure. He lost no time in leaving the island, which he did without having a parting interview with the lady, as she was removed the next day to the Ursuline convent. As to Dablesteen, he was so heartily detested on account of his general profligacy of manners and depravity of character, that not much effort was made to discover who had dealt him the last blow, the public well knowing that he had deserved it long before. He had, in fact, killed several men in his time, but family influence and wealth always enabled him to escape the punishment due to his crimes.

Hamilton returned to the United States, landing in New York city, where he spent a few days greeting former acquaintances and renewing past associations. He then

visited his mother at her comfortable home in the country, where he found all his family relations alive and well, who received him with joyful welcome after his long absence. He remained with his mother about two months, and becoming tired of an idle life, determined to engage again in business. His mother made him an advancement in money, which, with what he had acquired by his own industry and enterprise, amounted to a handsome little capital. He purchased twenty thousand dollars' worth of flour in the city of Baltimore, which he shipped for Havana, while he took passage in a packet and went on in advance, to have it engaged before its arrival. The captain of the vessel had on board a quantity of goods of his own, and, on arriving at Havana, made an attempt to smuggle them on shore to evade the duties required to be paid at the custom-house. In this attempt he was detected, the vessel seized by the custom-house officers, and the whole cargo confiscated, of course including Hamilton's flour. Every exertion was made by him to save his cargo. He spent about four hundred dollars amongst consuls, lawyers, etc., but all in vain. Thus he lost his fortune by the rascality of the captain; and, as if to aggravate his loss, the high price of flour at the time would have enabled him to have realized a large profit. Here, after all his toil, risk, application, and exposure to danger, he found himself a broken merchant, with the necessity of making a new beginning. But he was a man who knew not the meaning of discouragement.

From Cuba he went to Caraccas. He succeeded in obtaining a contract with the governor of Venezuela for coining the government funds upon very advantageous terms. Hamilton was to find the necessary implements and have the coining done, while the Venezuelan government was to furnish the bullion and allow him to put in ten per cent. of alloy. Of course he knew nothing about coining himself, but he was well acquainted with a man in New York who

had been employed eight years in the United States mint in Philadelphia, whom he proposed to associate with him in his undertaking. Having made all his arrangements with the governor, he embarked for New Orleans. When he landed, almost the first man he met on the levee was his former Jew partner, who greeted him in a friendly manner apparently, and then had him taken with a capias, for paying off Hamilton's share of the partnership debt, which, it will be remembered, had been settled at the time of the dissolution of partnership; and the sailing of the vessel had prevented Hamilton from obtaining the written evidence, which would have clearly established that fact. The Jew proved himself a true Shylock, by taking advantage of a lack of evidence to make him pay the same over again. He resolved not to submit to such injustice, and determined to go to jail rather than suffer the imposition. But, at the suggestion of the Jew, his trunk was broken open by the officer. It contained the last remnant of his fortune, amounting to about three thousand dollars. The Jew pretended to claim two thousand nine hundred and twenty dollars, and, after they had finished helping themselves, he found himself in possession of the pitiful sum of eighty dollars! It now became necessary for him to do something for a maintenance forthwith; so he engaged as clerk on board of a steamboat running on Red river, in which employment he remained until he could recruit his finances. The coining contract was constantly uppermost in his thoughts, but how to raise the necessary funds to complete it, was a question he could not solve.

He had an acquaintance in St. Louis—a silversmith—who had the necessary capital, whom he thought, by unfolding his plans, he could induce to join him in the undertaking. On arriving at St. Louis he found his friend; but he had failed and become insolvent. While here, he wrote a letter to a person in Edwardsville, Illinois, concerning

some real estate in the neighborhood of the place, in which he owned some interest. From St. Louis he came to Louisville to submit his plans to another acquaintance—a silversmith—but on arriving found he had been dead about two years. From there he came to Cincinnati. Here he bought a horse at auction, and made repeated excursions in the country, remaining absent from the city sometimes two or three days, his object, as he alledged, being to find a traveling jeweler named Lockwood, who he was informed had located in some county town in the Miami country. On the 8th of December, 1844, on Sunday forenoon, he came to Xenia from Dayton, put up at Merrick's Hotel, entered his name in the register, and remained until next day after breakfast, when he left.

On the following Sunday morning, December 15, the usual quiet of the peaceable town of Xenia was disturbed by the violent ringing of an alarm bell, which caused the citizens to hurry to the portico of the court-house to learn the cause. The prosecuting attorney addressed the people from the steps, and informed the crowd assembled, that James Smalley's merchant tailor's shop had been forcibly entered, the night before, and robbed of a large amount of goods, estimated to be worth some three thousand dollars. Committees were appointed to search the premises of the citizens generally, as the amount of the robbery was so extensive, it was conjectured that possibly the goods might be concealed somewhere in town, till a favorable opportunity occurred of removing them.

While the different committees were discharging their duties, others went out on different roads to search for some sign or clue that might indicate which road the burglar or burglars had gone. It was discovered that a horse, drawing some kind of vehicle, had been hitched to the fence, in sight of town, on the Dayton road. There was a little snow on the ground at the place, in which were tracks and

impressions of bundles having been laid down, which left no doubt that the thief had stopped at that place to arrange and pack his booty; that he had a one-horse carriage, of some sort, and had gone off on the Dayton road. This was all the clue discovered to detect the robber and recover the stolen property. Mr. M'Daniel immediately started for Dayton, followed soon after by Messrs. Blessing and Robinson. On arriving at Dayton about eleven o'clock, he made inquiry in town, and went out a short distance on several different roads; and when on the road to Greencastle he heard that a one-horse carriage had passed that morning early. He dispatched a note back to Dayton to inform his friends, and went on to Liberty to await their arrival, which was between eight and nine o'clock at night. They all took the road to Miamisburg, where they arrived about ten o'clock, having ridden rapidly, and made many inquiries which elicited no information until they arrived at Mechanicsburg, where they learned that a one-horse wagon had passed through, with something projecting from the hind part, wrapped in cotton baling, and had gone toward Cincinnati. They pursued on their dreary journey, as fast as their tired horses could go, suffering dreadfully from the cold, which was intense. About two o'clock they arrived at the village of Monroe, and at Simpson's tavern they saw the one-horse wagon, with something projecting from behind, wrapped in cotton baling. It was in fact loaded with fruit trees. Their horses were nearly broken down, and they themselves half frozen; and to have been pursuing a wagon of fruit trees was truly discouraging. Their despondency was of short duration, though; for on rousing up the landlord he informed them, that at half-past two o'clock a man driving a one-horse carriage stopped with him, took dinner, and had his horse fed; and gave a complete description of him, his horse, and buggy. He had been led to notice him particularly from the circumstance of his

commencing unhitching the horse from the carriage himself to take him to the stable, acting as though he did not wish any person to come about his buggy, which appeared to contain something bulky, that was concealed by an oil-cloth hanging down in front from the calash top. The stranger seemed in haste to start on his journey, and left immediately after dining. They were sanguine in the belief that this was the right man, and pursued on, hearing of him at the first toll-gate. He was traveling in haste, his horse wet with perspiration. They reached Sharon about six o'clock in the morning, their horses completely broken down; and they had suffered excessively with cold and fatigue. One of R.'s gloves was frozen to his hand, so as to peel off the skin when drawn off, causing the blood to trickle to the floor; and the skin was abraded from the inside of his legs, leaving them raw and bleeding, his horse being rough-gaited. They partook of some hot coffee, procured fresh horses, and darted off at a sweeping gallop—heard of the man at one of the toll-gates, where he told the keeper he was *going to church*, and was permitted to pass toll free. They arrived at Cincinnati before nine o'clock, having ridden fifty-six miles in little more than twelve hours—nearly all the time in the saddle, during one of the coldest nights of the winter, evincing perseverance, diligence, and energy worthy of commendation.

On arriving at the city they gave a description of the property to E. V. Brooks, Esq., a justice of the peace, at whose office they met constable Dalzell. They set out to search different stable-yards. Blessing went to the one belonging to the Lafayette House, but a short distance from the office, and, sure enough, found a buggy exactly answering the description. On inquiry he learned that a man, also answering the description, brought the buggy there about eleven o'clock the night previous. His name was shown in the register, and a warrant was issued by Esquire Brooks,

on the affidavit of Mr. Blessing. Making an arrangement with the bar-keeper to give information when the man returned, they started for the river. On approaching the landing, a boat had just started. They ran down the river some three-fourths of a mile, hailing and waving their hats to bring her to, but all in vain. She held on her course They were seriously apprehensive that the thief and goods were on board, as they expected of course that he would avail himself of the first boat that started. They made some examination of other boats that were about leaving, and then started to return to Brooks' office, Robinson and Blessing by way of Sycamore street, and constable Ruffin on Broadway. The latter entered the commercial house of Rogers & Sherlock, a short distance from the foot of Broadway, and found two boxes of goods, which he learned had been brought some fifteen or twenty minutes previously. At his request the boxes were opened, and the goods found to answer the description; and, sure enough, these boxes contained the very identical, stolen goods. They all returned to the office of Brooks, whence the officers all sallied out in search of the man. In a few minutes the bar-keeper came in and informed them that the person sought for was then settling his bill. There was no constable left at the office, and the magistrate and Blessing ran to the tavern, the former entering at the front door, and the latter through by the back yard to intercept his retreat. As soon as the justice took him by the arm, and informed him he had a little business with him, the blood forsook his face in such a manner, that his skin had the appearance of a corpse which had been dead two days, while his eyes assumed a glassy and filmy look, as if the light of the soul had been extinguished within. He moved along mechanically, like one in a trance whose "senses were all bound up." He did not utter a syllable until he reached the office, and then to say there was some change coming to him from

the landlord. He was assured that it should be returned to him, and was immediately led to prison.

There was still another difficulty. The prisoner could only be detained three days before an examination, and it was necessary that Mr. Smalley should be present, and identify his goods. As he was out on the search himself, it was altogether doubtful whether he could be found in time. An effort had to be made, and Mr. Blessing left the city about three o'clock in the afternoon, and, traveling all night, reached Xenia at one o'clock in the morning; had the satisfaction of finding Mr. S. at home, and communicated the pleasing information that his goods were all recovered. He went to Cincinnati; an examination was had, and the goods were delivered over to the proper owner.

The Cincinnati police officers evince much activity, shrewdness, skill, and boldness in the discharge of their duties. It is almost impossible for the most cunning rogue to escape their vigilance; and they make no hesitation in grappling with the most desperate offender, at the risk of their lives. Mr. Ruffin, the constable who found the goods, is now city marshal, a strong evidence of the high estimation in which his services are held and appreciated by those who know him best. For address, activity, tact, courage, and efficiency, his superior cannot be found. Alexander Dalzell is a first-rate officer, as well as a gentlemanly, whole-souled man, indefatigable in the discharge of his duties, with shrewdness, zeal, courage, and intrepidity. He has been shot, and several times stabbed, and otherwise received injuries in the discharge of his dangerous duties.

On the return to Xenia the prisoner's conduct and conversation were gentlemanly and decorous. He became sociable and communicative on all subjects, except when allusion was made to the robbery. Upon this he maintained a guarded silence. He observed that since he had become acquainted with Mr. Smalley he had found him to be a very

gentlemanly man, and he was glad he had recovered his goods again. He also made Mr. Smalley a present of his horse and buggy, remarking that he hoped it would prove some compensation for the trouble and expense he had incurred in consequence of his loss. He arrived in Xenia just four days from the time of his secret visit, and was confined in the north cell of the county jail until the March term of the court of Common Pleas.

Much curiosity was manifested to see him, and every one was surprised at his appearance. No one—not even the most experienced police officer—could or would have taken him for a burglar or thief. Instead of a down-sculking, chain-gang look—a hang-dog expression—his countenance was open, manly, frank, and expressive, while a steady look from his keen, searching eyes, made him appear to visitors as if he could read their thoughts. On being introduced to a stranger he received him in an easy, unembarrassed manner, remarking, that it was an unfavorable place to commence an acquaintance; still it afforded him satisfaction to see any one who might think proper to call on him, as a relief from the monotony of a prison life. He spent his time reading, being kept with a supply of books by one of the county officers. The sheriff guarded him with untiring vigilance, at the same time treating him with much kindness and humanity. His cell, clothes, and bedding, were all kept scrupulously clean, and his board was fully equal to a good boarding-house, while his deportment toward the prisoners was bland and benevolent.

Some idea may be formed of the prisoner's extraordinary art of pleasing, softening prejudice, and conciliating friendly regard, when one takes into consideration the aggravated nature and magnitude of the crime. The person robbed was an industrious, worthy man, with a large family of small children. He had just returned from New York with his goods, in which he had invested his entire capital.

If the goods had not been recovered he would have been a ruined man; it would have required health, unremitting labor, and economy for him to support his family. It might well be supposed that the perpetrator of such a wholesale, breaking-up robbery, who would quietly and deliberately transfer to himself, in one night, the avails of the industry and toil of an honest, hard-working man, for half a life-time, and which excited among the citizens so much indignation, would have been treated with sternness, if not rigid severity. That he should, under such circumstances, have gained for himself so much kind treatment, is evidence of extraordinary address, tact, and blandishment of manners. The impression he made on persons who visited him for the first time was so prepossessing as to cause each, on leaving his cell, to express astonishment that *such a person* could possibly ever have been guilty of *stealing*. He spent his time generally in reading and writing, apparently "clothed in a forced content."

On the night of February 1st, the sheriff returned home from watching with a sick man, at midnight. Passing by the south window of the jail, the opposite side from Hamilton's cell, he thought he saw a faint light, which he supposed at first was fire shining through the vent of the stove, and, passing the entry, he opened the blind door to see what it was. All was dark and silent. He set by his fire, warming himself before retiring to bed; but the light continually occurred to his mind. He was confident he did see a light in passing the window, though all was dark when he looked into the hall. As he sat pondering on the subject, he had a vague feeling or impression that something wrong had been going on. He took a candle, and, opening the blind door, looked in, and saw a pile of bricks lying in the entry; thereupon he ran to the room of the young man who officiated in his absence, and told him he had locked Harrison out in the entry. This was the name of a man

imprisoned for some minor offense, who was generally permitted to remain by the stove in the entry until bedtime, when he was regularly locked up in his cell. The young man was positive he had locked him in. The sheriff went into the entry with a cocked pistol in his hand, when, who should rise up from behind the stove, where he had crouched for concealment, but A. J. Hamilton, whom he had left that same evening on the far side of the prison, with two thick walls between him and the place he then was. No piece of "conjuration, or mighty magic," could have excited more astonishment. The prisoner's first remark was, "Don't be scared; there's no harm done." He was informed that no one was scared, and that if he attempted to escape, instant death would be his doom. The sheriff felt indignant that, after all his kindness, he should attempt to escape, and cause him to be censured for negligence in the discharge of his duties. While the process of ironing was going on, he remarked, in a calm, conciliating manner, that he did not blame the sheriff for what he was having done. "You, sir," said he, "have treated me so kindly—so much better than I expected or deserved—that I determined not to make an attempt to escape, from feeling, or a sense of gratitude; then I reflected that you had used uncommon caution and vigilance in the discharge of your duty; that, should I escape in the manner projected, it could neither expose you to censure nor injure your popularity; and *liberty is so dear—I have so much at stake*—that I yielded to the temptation, and made the attempt, which, but for a single casualty, would have been successful."

On examining the prison, it was found that a plan had been conceived, which, for ingenuity and originality of design, and facility of execution, was worthy of the genius of Jack Sheppard himself, or Monsieur D. L. Etuder. To comprehend it, some description of the jail in which he was

confined is necessary. A hall runs through the building, between the sheriff's residence and the prison cells. At each end of this hall there is an entry leading from it, between the cells and the external walls, which latter are of brick, in which there are two strongly-grated iron windows, exactly opposite to the gates opening in the cells. These entries are lined on the brick side with oak plank, two inches thick, and contain the stoves. The cells are constructed of blocks of stone, each block two and a half feet broad, eighteen inches thick, and from four to twelve feet in length, laid in cement, and ranging and breaking joints, like brick-work. Each stone is of the thickness of the walls, extending entirely through them. The gate-posts are each of a single slab of stone, two and a half feet wide, and six inches thick. Before being put up, holes were drilled through them for the hinge hooks which go through, and are secured on the opposite sides with screws and taps, places being cut in the stone to let in the latter flush—making them much stronger and firmer than the usual way of securing them with lead. When put up they were doweled with iron pins to the large block as a lintel across. The gates are all of iron, of great strength, and weigh nearly seven hundred pounds each. The walls are as strong as a cavern in the everlasting rocks, and the ponderous gates, with their secure fastenings, might, to all human appearance, with propriety, have the motto placed over the entrance which was over the gloomy portal of Dante's infernal regions; namely,

"Abandon hope, all ye who enter here;"

unless, it might be added, you come out according to the statute, in such case made and provided. A thick stone wall, sufficient for any common prison, separates the cells, in which there is a window for ventilation, secured with large flat bars of iron, set up perpendicularly in a stone sill and lintel. Two strong bars of iron are securely fastened

across the middle of the upright bars, to prevent the prisoners from bending them. To examine the ponderous walls, massive gates, heavy bars, and strong locks, one would be ready to conclude that no sane man would ever dream of attempting to escape. And, in addition, the sheriff watched him with as much vigilance as the dragon was fabled to guard the golden fruit in the garden of Hesperus. Yet from this prison, so strong, and so vigilantly guarded, did he attempt to escape; and but for the merest accident in the world, which might not have happened again in ninety-nine thousand times, he would have escaped.

The conception of the plan indicated him to be a genius of no ordinary kind, and fertile in expedients. His first step was to throw his plate into the privy, and to conceal the case-knife. When the attendant went for the plate, etc., he was reminded that it had been already carried out; and not seeing it, he supposed it had been. One side of the knife handle was imbedded in the end of a smooth stick, about eighteen inches long, and secured in its place firmly with twine obtained from a broom. In this way the knife was converted into a saw, with a good handle, which could be worked with both hands. A round was sawed out of a chair, and a split made in the end of it, in which was inserted a twenty-five cent piece with a bit sawed off the circumference, and secured with a wrapping of twine. This made a screw-driver, with which he took out an iron screw from the bedstead, the head of which was let flush in the end of a stick, and secured with the strap of his carpet bag. The stick had a natural bend in it, by which it could be turned like a brace stock; and in turning, the screw part would penetrate between two bricks, and easily loosen them for removal. For this purpose it was well adapted. Such were the tools prepared for breaking this miniature bastile. He first commenced sawing out two of the stout bars from the partition window, where no one would ever think of

examining, as the opposite cell was just like the one he occupied—equally as strong. The sawing of the bars occupied a month, as he had to watch for opportunities, and saw when the noise could not be heard. He always sawed with great industry when wagons and carts were rattling past. On the night he made the final attempt, he shortened the labor of sawing the last bar by giving it a wrench with the rail of the bedstead, causing it to break at the place partly sawed. It fell on the stone floor with a loud clang, to drown which he commenced whistling. Through this aperture he passed in and through the adjoining cell, before its occupants were locked up for the night. He concealed himself by lying down on top of the wood corded up in the far end of the entry, where he lay out of sight, but only a few feet from the man's head when he locked up the other prisoners. He now had only a brick wall to penetrate, which, as has been stated, was lined with oak plank, except that portion under the window opposite the stove, which, that it might not be set on fire, was lined with a cast iron plate, of the width of the window, and extending from the window to the floor. As soon as all was quiet a blanket was hung up over the window, to prevent observation from the street, the iron plate removed, and there was nothing left to do but to penetrate an unplastered, ordinary brick wall, which was so nearly done as to require only ten or fifteen minutes more to effect an escape.

After this he was kept constantly ironed, though the fetters were light, and he appeared to have abandoned all hope of breaking jail. Yet he had hope; for, as it has been quaintly said, "the very darkest cell of despair always has a gimblet hole, to let the glory of hope shine in and dry up the tears of the poor prisoner of woe." And so with him, the light which shone through the "gimblet hole" was, that may-be the witnesses from Cincinnati might not all attend court; that some link in the chain of testi-

mony might be wanting, by which he might escape the "grip of old father Antic, the law."

On the first day of the March term of the court of Common Pleas for Green county, 1845, he was brought into court, arraigned, and pleaded not guilty, and was remanded back to prison. Although he was in the court hall but a short time, yet the whole arrangement, judges, bench, jury, box, and every thing about it, seemed to have been stereotyped in his memory—so quick and accurate were his observing faculties. The witnesses in the meantime were all on hand. When brought into court again he made application to have his trial postponed, by filing an affidavit that he had a material witness absent; but the court overruled the motion, and directed the case to proceed on the day set, which was on the 20th of March. R. F. Howard, and B. Nesbett, Esqs., were appointed by the court to conduct the defense: J. G. Gest, Esq., prosecuting attorney. There were five counts in the indictment—the goods stolen, at a fair valuation, amounting to the sum of *one thousand three hundred and eighty-six dollars.*

Proof on behalf of the state: The goods were identified; the man who sold him the packing-boxes recognized the prisoner as the man to whom he sold them; the drayman identified him as being the same person for whom he hauled the boxes from the stable-yard of the Lafayette House to the storage store of Rogers & Sherlock; and the prisoner was recognized as the man who came and bespoke storage for the goods shortly before they were brought. The keeper of the livery stable proved he sold him the buggy, and traded him the horse which had drawn it—the same found at the Lafayette House; but, immediately on his arrest, returned the buggy to Hamilton, and received his money back. The affair looked exceedingly dark, so far as Hamilton's escape was concerned. Look which way he would, there seemed no avenue through which he could pass and be what

he once was. In short, there was not a single hook to hang a doubt upon. Still, Howard made a labored and lengthy speech in his defense.

During the trial the deportment of the prisoner was becoming his situation. He observed every thing with intense interest. At one time, while the state's attorney was speaking of his talents and attainments—sufficient to have enabled him to shine in any pursuit of civil life, in a manner useful to the public and honorable to himself—now perverted to the mean, dastardly, midnight thief; when he painted in glowing colors what he might have been, and contrasted it with what he then was, he seemed to feel it in all its force, and was affected to tears. He was found guilty, of course.

On the 21st he was brought into court, to receive his sentence. Much curiosity was excited amongst the people, and the spacious court hall was crowded to its utmost capacity. The presiding judge, VANCE, directed him to stand up, and asked him if he had "any thing to say why sentence should not be pronounced against him," to which he made the following reply:

"With submission to your honor, it was my intention to have pleaded guilty to the charge against me. And I had not altered that intention until about the time this court assembled, when some circumstances transpired, which left a hope that I might be acquitted by a jury of my countrymen. It has, however, been willed otherwise, and in obedience to that will I appear before the court this day to receive the sentence of the law, which your honor is about to pronounce upon me.

"Were that sentence to affect me only, I could receive it with less of that keen anguish which a different position imposes on me. Were there not others to repine at my present unfortunate situation, I could sustain myself with a greater degree of fortitude through this, the most calamitous period of my life. But I have kindred, who are dear to

me. There are those who are bound to me by those affections

'Which time nor space
Can utterly efface;'

and it is on their account, more than my own, that I most humbly but earnestly appeal to your honor to be as lenient toward me as the nature of my case will permit. I ask this for the following reasons:

"At the early age of fourteen I left my parental roof, to enter upon the busy scenes of life. Since that period I have held important situations in the first commercial houses in this country. I have sought my fortune upon the ocean, as well as on the land. I have traversed foreign climes, in the prosecution of commercial affairs; and through all these various pursuits, I have frequently been intrusted with large amounts of money and property, and heretofore my integrity has never been questioned. No charge has ever been preferred against me to blacken my character with infamy and disgrace—to carry overwhelming woe and distress to the bosom of a dear and widowed mother, and to blight the hopes and blast the happiness of an affectionate sister. But, alas, how uncertain are human events! I now stand before this tribunal, convicted of a crime which subjects me to a dread and fearful punishment—casts me beyond the pale of society—deprives me of the rights of citizenship—and exiles me, as it were, from my native country, a country dear to me on so many accounts.

"It is dear to me because its simple system of confederated government, from towns through counties and states up to one central legislature—legislative, judicial, and executive—guaranties those great principles of freedom and equality, so essential to the happiness of mankind; because its laws, customs, and institutions, are all favorable to the elevation of the masses; and hope, energy, and talent, are not oppressed here, as amongst some of the nations of

Europe, by usages which, though once useful in remoter ages, have long since been outgrown; because in this nation exists the possibility of raising all men to the full use of their powers, and the full possession of the highest privileges of earthly existence. And my country is dear to me because it gave birth to a Washington. Thus viewing the laws and institutions of my country, your honor can but imagine how deep is my anguish, that one error—one fatal error—deprives me of the privilege of participating in its glory and in its happiness. I make no complaint of the laws. I know that it is only in their maintenance that we are secure in those inestimable privileges purchased by the blood and patriotism of our forefathers. But I believe the laws were intended to reform, not to exterminate offenders. Already a deep feeling pervades the public mind in many of our large cities, as regards the best means to be used to reclaim erring man. And while it is conceded that the majesty of the laws must be sustained, it is believed that to deal out their penalties with a humane and merciful hand would have a greater and more beneficial effect upon many offenders, as it would awaken those feelings of gratitude, so essential as a first means toward a reformation.

"I have erred; yes, greatly erred. The frailty of human nature, more or less, we are exposed to. Forgiveness to genuine repentance is the cardinal principle of that Christianity which has triumphed over all its foes, and wafted many a spirit, as I hope and believe, to a brighter and a better world. I do not contend that laws for the government of mankind should be framed according to the divine laws. This would, doubtless, be inexpedient, as society is at present constituted. Yet I do believe those magnanimous principles of forgiveness, as taught by the Savior of mankind, not merely beautiful sentimental theories, fit only for heaven, but rational principles, which may, in many cases, safely and profitably be reduced to practice on earth.

"If, your honor, I had been an adept in crime—if my feelings had become callous from its contaminating influences, it is probable, nay, quite certain, that I should not have been here to-day, occupying the humiliating and unfortunate position which I now do. To the voice of conscience do I owe my arrest. To that inward monitor, which God has planted in the breast of every human being, do I owe my detection. And although that voice was not sufficient to deter me from crime, it was sufficient afterward to so overwhelm my feelings as to make me quite indifferent as to whether I was detected or not. The oft-repeated quotation, that 'man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn,' is not applicable to the treatment I have received since this unfortunate affair took place. Ever since I have been in custody here, I have been treated with kindness and civility by all with whom I have had any intercourse; but particularly so by your sheriff, Daniel Lewis, Esq., as well as that of his family. While your sheriff has been vigilant to an extraordinary degree, in the discharge of his duty, he has used every effort to render my imprisonment as cheerful as possible. And whatever position I may occupy in life hereafter, I shall always remember with gratitude his kindness to me. And to my counsel, who have made such extraordinary exertions in my defense, without any pecuniary compensation, I can but express my most profound acknowledgments.

"Life is a checkered scene. It is like a splendid river, down which we may glide with bright and glorious prospects—our hearts untrammeled with care, high in hope, and higher in ambition—the future gleaming with lovely things, 'our footsteps to allure,' until some fortuitous event overtakes us in our mad career, and dashes the cup of enjoyment from our lips. 'Tis then we are left to struggle with the adverse current, with the waves to weary and the billows to buffet us, until, disheartened and exhausted,

we yield to circumstances and pressing necessities, and commit deeds revolting to our feelings, and against the whole previous tenor of our past lives.

"Such is the position I occupy before your honor. A succession of misfortunes, almost unparalleled in their nature, so affected my reason and reflective faculties as to lay them dormant, while I committed a crime which must be a source of deep sorrow through the remainder of my life—a crime which I pledge myself, before this court, and before that almighty Being whose power and whose wisdom shine gloriously in his sacred word and in his works, never to commit again—no, never, though it were to gain the gems of Golconda or the gold of Mexico.

"I stand before this tribunal as one whose heart is overshadowed with grief and sorrow unutterable—whose pathway seems to lead through the dark labyrinths of despair—but one who, notwithstanding all his seeming depravity, still possesses a spark of that spirit's loveliness, which one kind word may kindle into a flame, and eventually purify, and make him a living monument of your honor's humanity."

While he was speaking a profound silence was observed—the fall of a pin might have deen heard. To form some idea of the effect, the speaker himself and the manner in which it was delivered must be taken into consideration. He was a well-proportioned man, of good address, fashionably and genteelly dressed, with an expressive countenance—pale from confinement—with remarkably keen, piercing eyes, of dark brown color. His manner of speaking was forcible and impressive. He was deeply affected—not the whimpering, hypocritical pretense, put on for effect, but deep, poignant, and heart-felt grief, which he strove to conceal, but which, in spite of his efforts, at times, almost choked his utterance. Such was the eloquence, feeling, and pathos of his manner, that Judge D., one of the associates, was

affected to tears, and others nearly as much touched in sympathetic feelings. On concluding, Judge Vance, whose appearance on the bench is dignified and prepossessing, addressed him in a very appropriate manner, concealing the "thorns of law under the flowers" of kindness and benevolence of manner. It is believed that the address of the prisoner had the effect to cause his sentence to be for a shorter term, by two whole years, from what was intended

He was assured by the court, that if his conduct in the penitentiary was such as to justify the warden in giving a certificate of his good conduct and behavior, the court would sanction an effort to obtain a reprieve before the expiration of his sentence—numbers of persons expressing an intention of signing a petition for that purpose. Such was the feeling amongst the crowd, caused by the almost magic effect of his address, that, could it have been put to vote, a majority, under the impulse of the moment, would have voted to let him go, under the impression that he would go and sin no more. This was the opinion contained in an editorial in the Torchlight, giving an account of his trial and conviction.

Before going to Columbus, he communicated the particulars of the robbery to the writer of these sketches, with whom he first counseled as his legal adviser, who, as such, he knew he could not be made to testify against him, and whose curiosity was much excited to know the particulars, believing, as he did, that he had an accomplice living in the place; yet he never would relate the particulars until after sentence, and then appeared to converse about it with pain and reluctance.

He stated, that the next morning after arriving in Xenia, he went down to look at the new court-house, being in the habit of noticing the public buildings wherever he went, if time permitted. On his return, he happened to stop opposite Smalley's, to look at the buildings across the street.

It was Monday morning; and he saw a man open the shop, and discovered that no person slept in it, and, consequently, might be entered and robbed with ease and security. That moment the temptation assailed him, and he yielded to its evil suggestion. Returning to Cincinnati, he bought the buggy, and exchanged his horse for one that had been broken in harness, and returned to Xenia; entering the town about nine o'clock, he drove through, out on the Springfield road, and put his horse in a high inclosure, leading to a slaughter-pen, where he left him, and came into town on foot. He took his station opposite the shop, at the place he was when the thought first occurred to him, where he remained until he saw the owner leave the shop: he then crossed over, and, entering a narrow passage between the shop and another house, saw two men working on the board, in a back room. He declared he was not sorry to find them there—that he could not help hoping that something might transpire to prevent him from succeeding; and yet so strong was the temptation, that he lingered on, remaining on the watch at the same place, and at last saw the two journeymen leave. Having found, in an open shop, a blacksmith's rasp, and a thin bar of iron, used for tending the fire, he found no difficulty in opening the door by prying, following one instrument after another, until the staple, or socket for the bolt, gave way, which it did immediately.

To enter, light a candle, and put the goods on the counter, convenient for moving them, was but the work of a few minutes. He expressed himself astonished at the quantity, which far exceeded his expectations; he expected to make a pretty good haul, but not equal to the one he did make. Having arranged every thing, he led his horse close up to the side-walk, and commenced carrying armful after armful into the buggy, glancing up and down the street every time he crossed, to see if any one was approaching. With

quick dispatch the buggy was loaded, and he commenced his retreat; but had not proceeded but a few steps, when the door, which he had shut, came open; thereupon he went back and fastened it, by putting a chip under it, considering, that, as no person slept in the shop, if the door were kept shut, the robbery might not be discovered until Monday, which would give him abundant time to get beyond pursuit, which, in fact, it would; but the door came open about three inches, which led to the discovery next morning, followed by quick pursuit; and nothing prevented him from finally escaping, as it was, but the fact that he had not money enough left to pay the freight on the goods, but had to sell his horse and buggy to raise the means, which he had just effected, a few minutes before his arrest, for thirty-five dollars. When he had got out on the Dayton road he stopped and repacked the goods, cutting off pieces of coarse drab cloth to make wrappers, which were sewed round the bolts of fine cloth. He was busily engaged about half an hour. When he came to that part of his narrative where he was so imprudent as to get out and repack the goods, when the snow would be sure to reveal that fact next morning, "Ah," said he, "had it not been for that"—pausing and shaking his head, while his whole countenance assumed an expression of the most intense and bitter chagrin—he not being aware that he was observed at the moment. He stated that his mind was so excited that it prevented him from feeling fatigue; nor did he suffer much with the cold, as he walked most of the time, to save the horse, and to keep himself warm from exercise. He took breakfast at Dayton, and took the turnpike straight for Cincinnati, where he arrived about eleven o'clock at night; so that the trip the Xenians took to Miamisburg, by way of Liberty, was so much time thrown away, as they were all that time off the track.

It was not until he had gone to bed, at the Lafayette

House, that he began seriously to reflect on the crime he had committed, and its consequences. A reaction took place in his mind, and he was smitten with such remorse of conscience that he had made up his mind to box up the goods next morning, place them in store, and direct a note to Xenia, giving notice where they could be found. During his sleep he was haunted with a dream almost as horrible as that of Clarence. He did not dream of being literally drowned, but he dreamed of being on a house, the whole face of the earth covered with water, as far as the eye could see: the waters were constantly rising; inevitable destruction awaited him, and he suffered all the horrors of death by anticipation. Next morning his good resolutions yielded to the suggestions of avarice, whispering to him that the deed was done, and he would be a fool to do so much, and risk so much for naught; and he made active preparations to start, packing up the goods in a clerk-like manner, in two common-sized packing-boxes, in the stable-yard of the Lafayette House.

He was taken to Columbus in the stage, the journey being performed in the night. He seemed to be enlivened by the motions of the coach, and conversed with some show of cheerfulness. His conversation was interesting, showing a wide range of practical knowledge. He sketched the characters of our leading statesmen of both parties with ability and discrimination. His topographical knowledge was very extensive and accurate, and his powers of description forcible. The great poet of nature says,

> "He is a bastard to the times,
> Who smacks not of observation."

This reproach could not be applied to him, for he was a person of immense observation, which let nothing escape. Toward midnight he fell asleep; and, as the moonlight fell upon his pale, well-chiseled features, and ample forehead, the thoughts of one of his attendants naturally reverted to

the miserable destination to which he was bound. Here was a young man, in the prime of life, of talents, address, and varied practical knowledge, with courage and firmness—one who might have shone in any profession—at the bar, in the pulpit, or in the halls of legislation, with honor to himself and advantage to the public—now a felon, convicted of a midnight burglary and robbery, and doomed to the state prison for a term of years.

The stage arrived at Columbus just after daylight, and turned up the river, to the place of destination. The sheriff remarked, in a good-humored manner, "Hamilton, yonder's the place;" on which he immediately put out his head, and the first glance caused his eyes to suffuse with tears. There stood, looming gigantically in the fog, that imposing structure, with its tiers of iron-bound windows, its massive stone walls, battlemented like some ancient feudal castle, conjuring up, in imagination, the dungeon, keep, turrets, bastions, etc., of one of those baronial strongholds of the middle ages, filling the brain with vague, undefinable feelings of terror and mystery. The stage drew up at the porter's lodge, or gate-house, where there was a guard, with his bright musket convenient; passing through, the prisoner walked, with some alacrity, in advance of his attendants, over the well-worn flags, along whose smooth surface so many unhappy men have trailed their fetters, being about to be ushered into a new life of seclusion, of toil, privation, and degradation, to become painfully and practically acquainted with the secrets of that immense prison-house. On entering the office he took his seat by the fire, while the warden at his desk, a benevolent, paternal-looking gentleman, gave him a scrutinizing look through his glasses, as though he would read his character, and, in fact, he seemed surprised to see such a man come there a prisoner. Here he parted with his conductors, whom he earnestly requested to call and see him before returning to

Xenia. After breakfast they returned for the purpose of examining the internal arrangement of this immense, complicated establishment—a community within a community, a community of itself—where the snorting engine, the whizzing wheels, the flying shuttles, and clattering hammers, mingled with the din of various machinery, would seem to produce unutterable confusion; but such is not the fact. Hundreds of human beings, with silent tongues and busy hands, are employed, with as much regularity as so many machines:

> "There passive limbs, to measured tasks confined,
> Obey the impulse of another mind:"

each one the companion of his own thoughts, and "thick-coming fancies." The entrance to the inner vallum is well calculated to strike a damp upon the feelings of prisoners, who, for the first time, are about to pass its gloomy and ponderous portals. Near the far end of the hall, or entry, there is a strong palisade of upright beams of timber, with spaces between them, through which musketry can be discharged. A gate, studded with knobs of iron, admits through this palisade, and, outside of it, by an ingenious contrivance, something similar to hoisting and shutting a mill-gate, a person can fasten or undo the great iron gate, which leads into the prison yard. This gives additional protection; for, should the prisoners make a rush at and secure the big gate, when opened, they would be stopped by the wooden wall, and be exposed to a close and deadly fire of small arms, through the interstices between the beams. This place might not unaptly be termed the citadel of the whole establishment. Each prisoner, on leaving his cell, the moment he steps out, is exposed to a raking fire of small arms, right and left, from one end to the other of each corridor. Gibbon, in speaking of the Prætorian guards, says forty soldiers cannot keep in subjection four hundred citizens, nor four hundred keep four thousand; but their

powers double much faster than their numbers beyond that, as forty thousand disciplined soldiers, in a strong garrison, may keep in subjection millions of artisans and peasants. This place is constructed with so much art as to give the power to a few to keep many in subjection; for, as Captain Patridge said, one man, armed with a loaded pistol, is equal to one hundred unarmed men, for, though he could kill but one, not one of the hundred knows but that one may be himself.

The prisoner was bound in his cell, clad in prison uniform, and, in presence of the warden, took leave of the sheriff and assistant, who left him shedding bitter, but unavailing tears, at his melancholy situation.

He was soon after placed in the hospital to attend the sick, a post he was well qualified to fill. Here his early initiation in a drug store was found to be of use to him in his new situation. Wirt says, "Old-fashioned economists will tell you never to pass an old nail, horseshoe, buckle, or pin, without taking it up; for, though you may not want it now, you will find a use for it sometime or another;" and so it is with regard to knowledge. There is not an item or fact which we may treasure up that will not be called up by the power of association, and be serviceable.

With medical books to read, a learned and skillful physician to prescribe, a dispensatory at command, and constant practice in administering medicines to the sick, he seemed to stand a fair chance to become a doctor. But he was eventually removed to another station, where he was employed in wrapping up stirrups, buckles, bridle-bits, etc., a business that was light and congenial with his early duties in a store. It has been suggested that the reason of his removal was a strong suspicion that he meditated an escape, which could have been more easily effected from the hospital than from any other portion of the prison. Never did a soul pant for freedom with more intense longing than his.

Never was confinement more irksome to any man: it was uncongenial with every faculty of his mind, his affections, and all his bodily habits and pursuits. And it is supposed that thoughts of freedom, and plans for obtaining his liberty, occupied much of his attention. Every circumstance he could lay hold of he was disposed to use for the purpose of obtaining his freedom. After the double murder had been perpetrated in Xenia, on the 2d of August, 1845, he wrote to the sheriff on the December following, in which he says: "I am very anxious to see you. I have something of a highly-important nature to intrust you with, in which, if you are not more interested than myself, I know there are others in your county who are. Don't fail to come, for rest assured you will never have cause to regret having done so. A most atrocious murder has been perpetrated in your midst since I left, which, I suppose, is yet shrouded in mystery. Two men have been mowed down, in the morning of life, and, without a moment's warning, sent to

> 'That undiscovered country,
> From whose bourne no traveler returns.'

The blood of these two young men cries from the ground for retributive justice upon those midnight assassins, whose ruthless hands so suddenly reft them of life. I hope the perpetrators of that horrid act will not escape the just condemnation of the law. That the mystery that hangs over that event will some day be removed, and the offenders brought to justice, I have no doubt. I know not how or why it is, but ever since the sad news of this melancholy affair has reached me, this impression has been wonderfully fixed in my mind."

He thought he had learned something from a convict while he was sick in the hospital, that would lead to the discovery of the perpetrators of the murder of these young men; and this was what he desired to communicate to the sheriff. The sheriff went, but nothing was elicited to lead

to any discoveries. He also wrote to the young man who attended the jail in the sheriff's absence, offering him a large compensation in money to try and obtain signers to his petition, and concluded by saying, "Lest you may doubt my ability to raise this from my friends, I will now, in strict confidence, disclose to you what I had heretofore determined to keep an inviolable secret. My brother-in-law's name is ——, a wealthy merchant of New York." That his connections were persons of high respectability, there is no doubt; for, in another letter on the subject, he says, "If I could only have a petition sent up with signers, *I could find the means to operate on the governor's mind*," etc.

The following extract from a letter from one of his counsel, will explain why the prospects of obtaining signers to a petition for his reprieve had been rendered doubtful. It was written in answer to one from him, earnestly entreating that something should be done in his behalf: "All this change in the prospect of obtaining signers to a petition for your reprieve, has been caused by that atrocious, bloody, barbarous, wanton, unprovoked double murder, committed in this town on the 2d day of last August was a year—a murder revolting to every feeling of humanity. It exasperated the feelings of the whole community; for, if such monsters in human shape were permitted to run at large, no one knows whose turn it would be next to fall a sacrifice to the destroyer, which, like the pestilence that walketh in darkness, destroys in the security of sleep. The citizens were roused from their peaceful slumbers to witness the glare of the conflagration, and to see the bodies of two amiable young men who had fallen by the hands of assassins: one of them with one eye beaten out, jaw broken, face horribly swollen and disfigured, brains oozing from a wound in the back of his head; the other with his head and legs burned off, and his trunk like a blackened cinder, lying on the sidewalk, exhaling a stench of blood—revolt-

ing—awfully revolting! while the citizens were straining every nerve to save property and combat the raging element, which was spreading with fearful rapidity. The next morning the news spread over the country like wild-fire, and brought in great numbers of citizens from the country. While parties of armed men were seen galloping out in different directions; and when a body of them rode up to the jail with a prisoner, they were almost instantly surrounded by a dense mass of people, and the captive was received with a shout so fierce, savage, and vindictive, that it was enough to strike terror into the stoutest heart and cause it to sink with dismay. In this murder you had neither agency nor knowledge. Why should it operate against you? But such is the consequence of crime. It frequently affects persons injuriously, not thought of or intended to be injured. This murder was the occasion of two more deaths—one the mayor of the town, a most estimable man and citizen, in the prime of life, with an interesting young family. In his exertions to save property, his house being one which was burned, he got thoroughly wet, and the exposure and fatigue brought on a fatal disease, in which he suffered more than either of the murdered men. The other was a delicate young man, who died from the same cause. A person whose charity has been imposed on by an impostor, might afterward refuse aid to real objects of distress, for fear of a similar imposition. In your case the murder of these two men has irritated the public mind, causing a feeling of severity and sternness to predominate against offenders, with a disposition to believe that all are pretty much alike, and would kill, too, if it had become necessary to avoid detection." In his answer to this he writes: "I was aware that the murders in Xenia had injured my prospects of obtaining a reprieve, and I had determined to put off the matter eighteen months longer; but my health has declined so rapidly through the summer. and

continues so bad—being now only able to write this sitting up in bed, a few lines at a time—that I was desirous that an effort should be made for my release this fall. If those who manifested a disposition to do something in my case when the proper time arrived for obtaining a release, should now refuse, because in the interim a horrid murder was committed in your midst, it is extremely unfortunate for me; especially so, as withholding that aid may prolong my imprisonment to a period which may cost me my life. I have been considering about communicating my situation to my friends, but am of opinion that a petition from your county, signed by some of the citizens, would be necessary, and do more good than coming from any other quarter. For more than one hundred days I have had more or less fever, with a general gastric irritation, causing much pain in the head and stomach. I am now in such a state as to be almost unable to take food. Perhaps I should not regain my health if I were released. But it would afford me unspeakable pleasure to see my friends once more, and if my health cannot be restored, to die among those who are near and dear to me."

A petition was written to the governor for a reprieve, and put in the hands of a person who was willing to act in obtaining signers. In consequence of the terrible state of his health, and the certainty that he would die if he remained in confinement, the prospect had been more favorable for success. But the news of his death rendered all further proceedings unnecessary.

Such was the end of a man calling himself Alexander Jay Hamilton, who might have succeeded in any profession, or adorned any walk in civil life, and been universally beloved and esteemed—might have lived to a good old age with all the accompaniments which should attend it, "such as love, obedience, honor, troops of friends." Instead of that, he died a convicted felon in a state prison, away from

all who were dear to him—no tender mother, no kind sister or friendly relative to hover round his bedside, like ministering angels, shedding tears of sympathy, and soothing and alleviating his sufferings—no friendly hand to close his eyes—not a tear shed over his pale remains. Such a fate ought to be a solemn warning to young men not to permit a love of wealth—an inordinate desire to be rich—to tempt them from the path of honesty, uprightness, integrity, and candor.

"Sincerity,
Thou first of virtues, let no mortal leave
Thy onward path, although the earth should gape,
And from the gulf of hell destruction cry
To take dissimulation's winding way."

The question naturally occurs, Was this burglary his first crime? He so averred to the court; and to the last, while he remained in Xenia, in all his most confidential communications, he still declared this was his first offense, and that the temptation to commit this crime was to raise means to carry on his contract for coining in Venezuela, having failed in all his attempts to induce any one to go in with him who had the requisite funds.

The writer of these sketches is of opinion that this was not his first offense. The conception of it was instantaneous, on observing, when the owner opened the shop on Monday morning, that *no person slept in it.* Now, an honest man, totally inexperienced in such matters, would scarcely have thought whether any one slept in the shop or not. As soon as his mind was made up to do the deed, every arrangement was made deliberately to carry it into execution. Every contingency appears to have been anticipated and provided for, even to the large needle used for sewing wrappers round the bolts of fine goods, the piece of spermaceti candle, matches, knife, and piece of cord. There was from its first conception to its completion a prudence, consideration, and forethought which would seem to imply some experi-

ence in the business. His correct judgment about the fastening of the door, rendering it unnecessary for him to bring any burglar's tools prepared on purpose—his presence of mind, in going back and putting a chip under the door to keep it shut, rightly concluding that if the burglary were not discovered until Monday he would be far beyond pursuit, which, in fact, he would, and had like to have been, as it was—his attempt to break jail, so original in conception and so skillfully managed, that one would hardly suppose a novice in such matters would have thought of or attempted it, which was a plan worthy the abilities and experience of a craftsman at the top of his profession—all gave additional and indubitable evidence of the strong cast of his mind.

His education was but an ordinary one at first, to which he added a knowledge of the Spanish language. He was not a bookworm, nor one of extensive literary attainments, having been emphatically a business man; but he had the happy talent of being able to control all his associations, and a facility of applying his knowledge to proper advantage, which, like ready change in market, was always available. He was a close observer, a good judge of human nature, and discriminated characters with almost intuitive precision and accuracy; and possessed the art of pleasing, gaining friends, and inspiring confidence in an extraordinary manner.

His talents, attainments, and address fitted him to be a very dangerous, bad man, and, with the moral virtues, would have made him a useful member of the community, the pride of his family, the delight of his friends, and an ornament to society.

> "Virtue
> Is like the sun; and all which rolls around
> Drinks life, and light, and glory from
> Her aspect."

The following extracts are made from a long letter, dated August 29, 1845, which he addressed to the sheriff and one of his counsel. It is rather metaphysical for a convict,

but will doubtless be read with some curiosity by the reader:

"GENTLEMEN,—I have never expressed to you those sentiments of gratitude which I so sincerely entertain and cherish for the favors and kindness I have received from you. And it always will be impossible to express them; for no language can adequately convey my feelings on this subject, knowing as I do that the motives which prompted you to take any interest in my welfare sprang from nothing but those benevolent and philanthropic feelings which you possess in an eminent degree. I shall ever be impressed with a sense of deep gratitude toward you, especially when I remember your kindness was manifested toward me in the darkest hour and most calamitous period of my life.

"Of all the feelings and dispositions which the Almighty has more or less conferred upon man, that of benevolence stands forth the purest and highest. It is a sentiment which diffuses a pleasing influence on all the social affections. Its exercise alleviates distress and increases the happiness of mankind. The motives from which it acts are as pure as its works are beneficial, being a spirit of universal kindness to all mankind, from enlarged views of philanthropy and Christian duty. As the bee extracts honey from the most unlovely weed, so the benevolent mind draws something good from all who come within its benign influence. What a world of strife, contention, suffering, sorrow, and misery would be spared to mankind, were its practice universal! But, alas! man is a wayward being, and himself his greatest enemy. For what is all his toil, strife, and inordinate desire to aggrandize himself? If we take a retrospective view, how stands the account? Have not man's noblest achievements yielded to the victorious tooth of time? We can find an answer amidst the ruins of Palmyra and Jerusalem. Behold! the city of God hath fallen. The musing traveler searches in vain for the splendid temple

of Solomon. It no longer exists, only in description and fancy Its glory hath departed for ever. And where are thousands and tens of thousands who have inhabited the Sacred City, and whose voices once made the temple voca with the songs of praise? They have passed away like a shadow. Rome, too, the city of the seven hills, though called the Eternal City, is strown with the moldering fragments of other ages and of departed greatness—and Carthage and Thebes, which time has 'grated to dusty nothing.' Such are a few of the instances of the end of all human grandeur and all human greatness. They are the oracles of past ages, and are eloquent in their silence and desolation.

"If, to turn from the contemplation of the works of man we turn to those of a higher power, how sensibly shall we be impressed with the works of the Almighty! I have stood upon the lofty Andes, and beheld a prospect of indescribable grandeur—have viewed, from the iron hills of Cuba, a landscape of unsurpassable loveliness. I have traversed the broad and beautiful prairies which border on the Rio del Norte, covered with the green verdure of June, and interspersed and bespangled with beautiful flowers, forming a grand and beautiful view, like one vast flower-garden. I have beheld the rushing waters of the stupendous cataract of Niagara. I have gazed at the sun, moon, and stars, in all their resplendent glory; and it was at such times, when viewing such scenes, that I have been impressed with feelings of indescribable awe and reverence; and not a doubt existed in my mind, that the mighty and majestic structures of the heavens and the earth were the works of a divine, glorious, and almighty Architect. The mind shrinks from its incapacity to comprehend the gigantic wonders of creation; yet we can comprehend sufficient to overwhelm us with wonder and admiration, and fill the soul with reverence and veneration for their divine Author. A

due appreciation of the works of creation will impart pure and elevated thoughts and impressions, closely allied to religion and morality, so essential to our present happiness and future felicity.

"There is nothing in this world that is more talked of and less understood than happiness. It is every one's wish and desire; yet how few comparatively know what it consists in! For one I am well convinced that real happiness can only be found in the enjoyment of religion, and living near the Fountain and Source of all excellence. Philosophy may teach us the importance of governing unruly passions. Reason and self-interest may teach us the utility of cultivating the arts and sciences and practicing the moral virtues; but still the soul of man is capable of soaring after higher objects and aspiring to more perfect happiness. Sincere religion only can inspire us with just conceptions in regard to the momentous relations we sustain to futurity—to give tranquility and resignation to the mind, and buoy up and sustain the soul in the storms and adversities of life—to infuse those heaven-born feelings which expand the soul and give a foretaste of the rapturous joys of a blessed immortality.

"Entertaining these views, no consideration shall ever induce me to swerve from the path of rectitude and virtue; and aside from any consideration of the future, there are considerations of a present and personal nature which will for ever deter me from subjecting myself to such punishment as I am now enduring. These considerations are, that I am fully convinced that whoever pursues a course of conduct in direct contravention to the laws of his country will invariably drag out a miserable existence in chains and slavery; and, according to my present views, life is not worth purchasing at such a price. Rather than such a life I would prefer some uncivilized country, where I could be as free as the beasts that roam the forest.

"The question might very properly be asked, Why, then, have you subjected yourself to your present condition? In an evil moment I turned aside from the path of rectitude, and deprived myself of that which to me was paramount to all considerations—my liberty and character. O, liberty! what an inestimable blessing! We can scarcely fully appreciate thy value until deprived of thy enjoyment! No wonder our forefathers united together to achieve so glorious a boon, whose blessings, like the dews of heaven, descend on the great and the small. How much should we revere the memory of Washington, that incomparable man, who, by his wisdom, his great good sense, his patriotic devotion to his country's cause, was able, by the blessing of Divine power, to triumph over all difficulties, and laid our present admirable system of government! The name and fame of Washington will never be lost to the knowledge of the human race. He will live in marble and in brass—in poetry and eloquence.

* * * * *

"With regard to the institution of which I am now an inmate, as to the various reports you hear outside about the cruel and inhuman treatment exercised toward prisoners here, I can say, so far as I am able to judge, that they are entirely unfounded. Indeed, I believe the warden of the institution is a gentleman of a humane and benevolent disposition, and I do not believe it is his desire to punish any one. I am certain that whoever will conduct himself in a proper manner need not apprehend any difficulty whatever; but, in an institution like this, order and discipline must be maintained, and, consequently, the refractory and disorderly must expect punishment. The work here is constant; but, with the exception of one or two shops, I do not think it very laborious. The food, though coarse, is plenty and wholesome; and the prisoners generally are hale and hearty. The arrangement for the sick is appropriate and comfortable,

and it ought to be a consolation to those who have friends here, that whenever they are ill every attention is shown them. Indeed, I do not think that they would receive better treatment in any of our best-regulated hospitals in our large cities.

"Divine service is performed every Sunday in a loft over one of the shops, very neatly fitted up for that purpose. The clergyman who officiates is of the Presbyterian order—a gentleman of fine acquirements, though not an eloquent man. He has a manner, while reading a portion of the Bible, of explaining each verse as he proceeds, which I think eminently befitting the audience to which he has to preach, and, to my mind, more instructive than his sermons. The financial condition of the institution is in a flourishing condition, yielding an annual revenue to the state of some fifteen or twenty thousand dollars. Good order, regular discipline, and economy prevail throughout every department; and, from what I have been able to observe, I do not think the institution could be in better hands.

"In conclusion, I consider myself extremely fortunate, after what has been done, to fall into the hands of such people as your citizens, who to firmness in executing the laws, unite kindness and humanity. To all such, I beg to return my most grateful acknowledgments.

"Please to remember me kindly to my counsel, Messrs. Howard and Nesbett, and to all others with whom I had any intercourse.

"Very respectfully, A. J. H."

The following is a copy of a letter written by Hamilton to the sheriff of Green county:

"*Ohio Penitentiary, Columbus, August* 2, 1846.

"Daniel Lewis, Esq.—Dear Sir,—It is not unknown to you, that before I left Xenia for my abode in this prison, several gentlemen of your town and county expressed an

intention of signing a petition to the executive for my pardon, at the proper time. While I feel truly grateful to them for their friendly intentions toward me, I am happy to inform them, through you, that I trust I have received a pardon of far greater importance—a pardon, not from his Excellency, the Governor of this state, but from the Governor of governors—the great Prince of the universe.

"What has that great Prince done for poor, wretched man? He has made the earth to yield richly and abundantly for all his temporal wants; and has made it beautiful in aspect, touching in harmonies picturesque in contrasts. 'He has bound it around with rivers as with diamonds, and surrounded it with the ocean as with a cincture.' He has given it variety of seasons, corresponding with all the various wants of man. He has peopled the land and the ocean, the mountains, valleys, rivers, and lakes, with innumerable hosts of living beings, to feed on the sustenance provided for them. Man only, amongst them all, has been endowed with reason, and can hold all others in subjection by the power of mind and reason. All this that great Supreme has done for ungrateful man. He has done incomparably more than that. He has offered an atonement by the blood of a Savior, freely shed upon Mount Calvary, 'that whoso believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life.' When we take into consideration the fallen condition of man, and the consequent utter helplessness of his condition, with what feelings of gratitude ought we not to be inspired toward a being of such infinite love and mercy! Man was originally created a pure and upright being; but the destroyer came, and polluted the fair temple of God's glorious image. High Heaven looked down upon man's lost condition, and the plan of redemption was formed, which, in due time, was consummated by the birth, crucifixion, and resurrection of our Lord and Savior.

* * * * *

"I wish just to say, that a contemplation of this stupendous miracle has been my only encouragement in setting out in the ways of religion; for when, in the providence of God, I was brought to a sense of my utter unworthiness, such mountains of sin rose up before me as made me doubt and fear that God would not wipe away my manifold transgressions. But, on searching the divine oracles of truth, I found such abundant evidence 'that Christ came into the world to save sinners,' as induced me to cast these doubts aside, and commit my cause to Him who has said, 'Though your sins were as scarlet, I will make them as white as wool.' 'Truly, we have an advocate with the Father—one who has conquered sin, led captivity captive, and purchased our redemption with his blood.' God has promised, to all who fight under the banner of our Savior, and are faithful to the end, not only pardon and peace here, but a crown of immortal glory in a world to come.

"You have doubtless, in the course of your life, known a man who was intemperate and profane, a curse to his family, and a pest to society, suddenly become a sober, industrious, and good man. He had not only become reformed as to the grosser vices, but was really walking in accordance with the commands of God. What think you effected such a radical change in his character and conduct? Had the angel Gabriel led him, in a vision, to empyrean—overpowered his faculties with the effulgence of divine glory? or did he frighten him, by placing him on the brink of a crumbling pit, where he might behold the ruin and despair of the workers of iniquity? Neither. But he had learned the faithful saying, 'that Jesus Christ came into the world to seek and save that which was lost,' and that he bore our sins in his own body, on the tree—that he suffered, the 'just for the unjust'—'that he was wounded for our transgression, and bruised for our iniquity.'

He then saw that pardon and peace, through the atoning blood of Christ, are freely uttered to the chief of sinners. He became a humble suppliant at the throne of mercy, and received pardon and a remission of his sins. But this is only a single trophy of the Gospel of Christ. The first time the sword of the Spirit was grasped by mortal hands, three thousand fell under its mighty influence. Since then, millions of the human race have bowed to its sceptre. It has at length reached my breast, and I shall be able to express my gratitude to the Author of all true happiness, for its efficacious operations on my heart and conscience.

"I ask for no greater specimen of Almighty power—not the word which stayed the proud waves of the sea—not the mighty arm which hurled the vast orbs of heaven along the fields of unlimited space—nor 'Sinai's thunder pealing from the clouds.' But let me ascend Calvary, let my eyes be directed to the bleeding victim on Calvary, for there alone is to be seen—according to God's own declarations—what is the exceeding greatness of his power. Here we see the consummation, given to Adam in the hour of his depression. Behold a bleeding Savior, suffering an ignominious death on the cross, to redeem man from the bondage of sin. It was only by uniting the divine with the human nature, that God's justice and mercy could 'kiss each other.'

"When we reflect upon the unbounded mercy of our Creator, we should feel a hallowed flame of ardent zeal in his service, and look forward to the prize of inestimable value.

"What melodious music is it that salutes our ravished ears? From yonder azure sky it comes. 'Tis Religion on her triumphant car, in robes of purity and truth, saying, 'Receive me, and I will bind your brows with crowns which fade not away. Receive me, and I will lead you to fountains of living waters, and to scenes of unfading glory. If

you delight in progress, here your progress shall be commensurate with eternity.'

"What moral grandeur is there in the character of that man who has embraced Christianity, and received it in his inmost soul! Amid the 'war of elements, the wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds,' he is safe, for the edifice of his hopes is built on the Rock of ages. True religion takes away the sting of death, and despoils the grave of its victory. Pride, fortified in the principles of philosophy, may enable one to meet death with feigned composure; but divine religion alone takes away the sting of death, and despoils the grave of its victory.

"It has pleased the Almighty to endow man with an intellect susceptible of the highest improvement, to impart to his soul aspirations to those mansions in the skies, where angels tune their harps with living melody, and saints in sweet responses breathe forth their songs of joy and gratitude. When his heart is purified by Christianity, he then deservedly ranks as one of the noblest works of the great Creator. Shall we forget the high object for which we were created, and jeopardize our eternal happiness, amidst the transient pleasures of the earth? No; let us elevate our thoughts and affections to that Being who does all things for our good, whose grace purifies all that is vicious and corrupt in our nature, and, by the inconceivable riches of his mercy, draws us to himself, and by degrees opens our eyes to see the greatness of that beauty which at first we are unable to understand.

"Some doubt the immortality of the soul. If the soul be not immortal, then is religion a splendid delusion. Men of great talents have devoted their lives to undermine this mighty structure, upon which rests the future hopes of millions. Did they consider that they were seeking to break down that column which is the only support and consolation of the poor, the unfortunate, and the cast down?

"O, tell me not that when I repose in the silent grave, I am doomed to a night of eternal darkness. For what purpose did Christ come into the world—for what did he lay down his life, as pure as the pearl beneath the ocean wave—for what did he endure those agonizing tortures on the cross, if there be no hope beyond the grave? 'Verily, if in this life alone we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.' I have beheld Nature, arrayed in her gorgeous robes, wither, and fade, and become dreary and desolate. Yet, I beheld the scene reanimated—the fair buds came forth, and expanded their beauties to the sun. The rose, the lily, the moss cup, and tulip, and all the beauteous 'sisterhood of flowers,' again decorated the hills and valleys. I have known the worm spin itself a tomb: for a time it lay in its silken cone; but at length it came forth with new life and beauty. It came forth, not a worm crawling in the dust, but a beautiful butterfly, with enameled wings and brilliant colors, to fly abroad in the pure air of heaven, and sport from flower to flower. So shall it be with thee, O, man; thou must be laid low in the dust, but there is a voice that shall call thee into being again. At the sound of that voice thou shalt burst asunder the prison doors of the tomb and come forth to life, to participate in weal or woe for a never-ending eternity.

"There is something sad in the falling leaf. There is something melancholy in the reflection that nothing beautiful can escape the unsparing tooth of time. There is something awful in death—but there is a hope in a blessed immortality.

"Hope is the cordial of life; it comes to us in infancy, and attends us through the journey of life, frequently cheating us with anticipations we never realize. But Divine hope never misleads us. The one is a meteor, which often leads us into marshy places, and becomes extinguished on its humid borders. The other is like the pillar of light,

that piloted the Hebrews through the pathless desert from the house of bondage. The Christian's hope is a passion-flower, sprung from the blood of Christ and watered by his grace. Elijah, as he ascended in his fiery chariot, threw his prophetic mantle on his favorite disciple: Christ, when he ascended to glory in the heavens, left us something better than the cloak of Elijah—the hope of one day being united to him in a glorious immortality.

"My past life has been a checkered scene. I have had a fair competency one day, and been as poor as a beggar the next. I have had alternately the smiles and frowns of Fortune. I have glided down the stream of life buoyant with the bright hopes of fortune and happiness; but at last the stream turned against me with a torrent not to be resisted; and I thank Heaven for the storm that has driven me into the channel which leads to the harbor, as I hope and believe, of eternal rest.

"It is with pleasure I inform you, that strenuous efforts are being made to improve the moral tone of feeling amongst the prisoners here. We have a pretty extensive library of good books for our use and improvement. This is as it should be. What does a community gain by incarcerating a man a few years in a place like this, if no attention be paid to his moral condition? Nothing, any longer than his confinement lasts. Most men whom the law overtakes and sends to an institution like this, probably never reflected much on the future. Let them, then, when their spirits are depressed under a sense of their misfortunes, be properly instructed in a knowledge of that religion, whose sublime doctrines and pure principles alone can cleanse them from sin, purify their lives, and elevate them from degradation.

"I consider the community at large, as well as ourselves, fortunate in having a chaplain—the Rev. J. B. Finley—who is zealous in the discharge of his important duties. He is

well qualified to impart instruction and promote reformation amongst the prisoners. He is a fine old gentleman, of good common sense, popular address, ardent piety, and true benevolence of character. I think he is destined to do great good here, and I hope the Lord will crown his labors with abundant success."

CHAPTER XX.

Interesting interview—Adjournment of conference—Prison discipline—Causes of crime—Lax family government—Liquor-selling—Kendall's description of Newgate prison, Granby, Conn.—Infernal treatment—Strange enactment—Mt. Pleasant prison, N. Y.—Sing Sing prison—The devil among the officers—A new era—Folly of official pardons—Obstacles in the way of reform—Long commitments—Officers of the prison—Proceeds of convict labor—Instruction of convicts—Boys—Compensation for labor—Contractors generally a hated and heartless set of men—Choice of a warden—Directors and inspectors—Relatives—Sabbath work—Remedy proposed.

Sunday, September 6. I am still at conference. To-day I had the pleasure of holding communion with many of my brethren, young and old. Among the latter class I hailed once more on the shores of time three of my old comrades, who were members with me of the original Western conference, when the great valley of the Mississippi was a howling wilderness. We four are the only survivors. The rest have all gone to their reward. The veterans alluded to are Revs. James Quinn, Jacob Young, and David Young, whose praise is in all the Churches. They have all been hard-working, faithful, substantial ministers of the Lord Jesus. Through all the fluctuations of the times, for more than half a century, while many have changed, some have withdrawn, and others have fallen from the faith, these men of God have stood firm. The fruit of the labors this world will never fully appreciate nor understand. The next will bring it all to light; and when, on glory's banks, the seals of their ministry shall be called for, O what a happy throng will stand up to say, "These men were they who turned our straying into heaven's flowery road!" O my soul! Shall such a poor, unprofitable, unworthy being as I be there!

This Sabbath was a day of mercy to my soul.

Monday, Sept. 7. The day was devoted to conference business.

Tuesday. This is the last day of conference; and to-morrow morning I leave for Columbus.

Wednesday. This morning early I started for home, in company with Rev. David Young.

Thursday. The day was spent in resting and visiting with my conference brethren and other friends.

Friday. Very early this morning I resumed my work again in my interesting charge. I found that my absence had endeared me to my people. They received me with open arms; and never did I feel more like making sacrifices for their good.

The remainder of this day, and all of Saturday, were spent in making a thorough re-examination of the discipline of the prison, a subject often upon my thoughts; and though I have, here and there through this volume, given out remarks in relation to this all-important topic, I have just thrown together the chief of my reflections upon the subject, and will here present them to the reader, to supply the lack of incidents for this week.

The reader of the present work will do me the justice to admit, that, from my long connection with the prison, as moral instructor, I have enjoyed peculiar advantages in determining what is the best mode of discipline to be pursued in regard to the prisoners. They have, as a general thing, unfolded to me their personal sorrows and difficulties—their trials of mind and their fears and hopes of heart; and, so far as I have been able to discern, they have proved themselves susceptible of emotions of kindness and tenderness. I have consequently been impelled to the conclusion, that, under a proper course of discipline, by far the greater number of them are capable of change and reformation.

Before entering strictly upon the question of prison discipline, the reader will bear with me while I refer to some of

the causes which impel to crime throughout our country, and which especially prevail at the present day. First, I name a system of lax family government. Industry and obedience are prime virtues in every well-regulated family. Where these are absent, there we find anarchy and misrule. The boy who is allowed to set at defiance the word of his father, or his mother, will feel equally at liberty to set at defiance the laws and commands of his country. And the youth who is permitted to lounge around the street-corners, or in coffee-houses, smoking a cigar or sipping a glass of liquor, will, as he grows up, become nothing else but a street loafer, intent on nothing except villany and theft.

A great many children of the present day seem to come up just as they please. As to restraint or discipline, they probably know nothing about either of the words. Their parents educate them just about as they educate their cows or their horses; and that is, without one particle of moral principle being infused into their natures. What marvel, then, is it, that these self-indulged, headstrong, yet greatly conceited boys, should make rapid strides in the course of sin, and land themselves safe in the state prison? I repeat, then, that the want of pious parents and faithful guardians is a fruitful cause of crime in our midst, and one which adds wonderfully to the growth in numbers of our penitentiary inmates.

Secondly, I name as a positive and direct cause in producing crime, and consequently distress and misery, the making and vending of spirituous liquors. Long as we have men in our midst to sell liquor, just so long may we expect to have iniquity and crime. The rum-seller, of all other wretches, is the greatest murderer. We have men in this prison for life who are guilty of murdering one man; but the rum-seller kills his half a dozen or twenty, and yet he goes unpunished, and almost unthought of. Here is a fair specimen of his way of operating: On the seventeenth

of January, 1846, as I learn from an item in the Dayton Transcript, coroner Henderson was called to hold an inquest over the body of a man, found dead, near the town of Liberty, in Montgomery county, Ohio. The deceased was an intemperate man, and on the day previous to his death was at the tavern kept by H. Cain, on the Eaton pike, where, according to the testimony before the coroner, he was furnished with liquor to drink. He started home quite drunk, with his bottle filled, and was found dead in a fence-corner, on Mr. Metsgar's farm, about a mile distant from the place where his murderer lived. His murderer, I say; for where is the difference between murdering a man with whisky and murdering a man with a bowie-knife or pistol? The latter accomplishes it rather more speedily, yet not more certainly, than the former. On this point, and as incontestible evidence of the prolific cause of crime by liquor, I have only to add, that of four hundred and ninety-eight convicts in this prison, three hundred and thirty-three were in a state of complete or partial intoxication when they committed the crimes which caused their arrest and imprisonment.

But to return. The great object of imprisonment is to protect community, and to reform the prisoner. How shall the latter object be attained? By austerity and harshness? By severe and cruel discipline? I think not. "No man," says Cowper, "was ever scolded out of his sins." No prisoner was ever whipped out of guilt. Yet it was formerly the practice, and in limited cases is the practice yet, to employ all manner of harsh means in effecting the reform of prisoners. From the journal of Edward Augustus Kendall, Esq., published in 1819, I copy the following description of Newgate prison, situated in the town of Granby, Connecticut. "Ascending," says Mr. Kendall, "the western side of West Mountain, I discovered at length the walls of the prison rising gray upon the brow. On the east side the road was skirted at a small distance by lofty, precipitous

crags, and on the west by extensive valleys, with mountains in the distance. The prison walls were by the road-side. The prisoners in the jail are kept at hard work in the smithy, within the walls. They commence their labors at four o'clock in the morning, and close at four in the evening. The landlord recommended that I should witness their first appearance in the morning, to which I acceded. It is the plan of this establishment to make it an object of terror. Several of the higher crimes are punished by confinement for life; while for lesser, the duration is limited to a certain term of years. While confined, however, every prisoner partakes of the common fate. On being admitted into the jail, I found a sentry under arms, within the gate, and eight soldiers drawn up in a line in front of the jailer's house. A bell summoning the prisoners to work had already rung, and in a few moments they began to make their appearance. They came in irregular numbers, two or three together, and sometimes one alone. But whenever they went to pass through the yard to the smithy, the soldiers were ordered to present, in readiness to fire. The prisoners were heavily loaded with irons, secured by hand-cuffs and fetters; and being unable to walk, they made their way by short jumps. On entering the shop some went to the side of their forges, where collars, dependent from the roof by iron chains, were fastened round their necks, and others were chained in pairs to wheelbarrows.

"From all its arrangements, this establishment is designed to be a terror to the convict; and every thing about it is so contrived as to make life as burdensome and miserable as possible. The place chosen for this prison is no other than the mouth of a forsaken copper mine, of which the excavations are employed for cells. They are descended by a shaft, which is secured by a trap door, within the jailer's house, which stands upon the mouth of the mine. This door being lifted up, I went down on an iron ladder,

perpendicularly fixed, to the depth of fifty feet. From the foot of the ladder a rough, narrow way, or passage, descends still deeper, till it terminates at a well of clear water, over which is an air shaft seventy feet in height, and guarded at its mouth by a hatch of iron. The cells are near the well, but at different depths beneath the surface—none, perhaps, exceeding sixty feet. They are small and rugged, and accommodated with wooden berths and some straw. The straw was wet, and there was much humidity in every part of this obscure region. Into these cells the prisoners are dismissed at four o'clock in the afternoon, every day, without exception, and at all seasons of the year. They descend in their fetters and hand-cuffs, and at four in the morning they ascend the iron ladder, climbing it as well as they can by the aid of their fettered limbs. Going again to the smith or work-shop, I found the attendant of the prison delivering pickled pork for the dinners of the prisoners, and pieces were given separately to the parties at each forge. They were thrown on the floor, as to dogs, and left to be washed and boiled in the water used for cooling the iron wrought in the forges."

Such is the seat and the scene of punishment provided by a Christian community for men not guilty of murder, treason, or any of a few other capital offenses. What judgment the reader will pass upon it, I will not venture to say; but I cannot myself get rid of the impression, that there is something very much like savage cruelty, both in the device and the design. A humane visitor will call in question the rectitude of persons by whom these convicts are placed in this prison. Every circumstance of pain, every ragged projection on the walls, every broken and dangerous part of the descent, the narrowness and obscurity of the cells—all will offend his judgment and humane feelings, rather than amuse his fancy. He never will be able to understand how good men can occupy themselves in the invention of

circumstances of so much affliction and distress. This kind of treatment always adds to the depravity of the heart Prisoners are treated precisely as tigers are treated in a menagerie; and what marvel if they evince the ferocity of a tiger?

Should any one coolly ask, with what view this system of punishment is kept up, the answer must be, either to reform or to punish the prisoner. If it be to reform, it is, then, one of the most foolish and imbecile of all projects. If it be to punish, it is one of the most inhuman of all plans, which the ingenuity and cruelty of man combined could contrive to torture his fellow.

The following enactment is sufficient to show the feeling which is exercised toward convicts in prison:

"Be it farther enacted, that at the expiration of the term of confinement for which any prisoner is or may be sentenced to Newgate prison, if it appear by the warrant of commitment that he is ordered to stand committed until the cost be paid, and such prisoner shall not be able to pay the cost, or to secure the same to the acceptance of the overseer of said prison; in such case the officers of said prison are hereby empowered to assign such prisoner in service to some inhabitant of this state, or of any of the United States, for such term as they shall judge necessary to pay such cost, taking reasonable security of such inhabitant to pay the same to the state."

Comment is here unnecessary. The enactment is an insult to the common sense of every citizen of the American republic, and is worthy only the darkest days of barbarism.

We leave the reader to his own reflections on the discipline of this prison, satisfied that his feelings will utterly revolt at such policy in the government of human beings.

The following is an extract from the report of the directors of the Mount Pleasant prison, N. Y., made January 6, 1846.

John S. Mattocks, assistant keeper, says that in one case a convict, by name of Kinton, was punished for desertion, he thinks, with from one hundred and fifty to two hundred lashes, with a cat, on the naked back. This instrument having six strands, inflicts six lashes for every stroke, which would have made for this prisoner twelve hundred lashes. His back was much lacerated and mangled. Mr. Mattocks says that at another time he saw a black man punished by a keeper named Burns, in the cooper shop, with three hundred strokes of the cat, or eighteen hundred distinct lashes. In consequence of the dreadful laceration on the back and legs, he was unable to walk or to work, and was shut up in his cell, on a low diet, and afterward became deranged. The agent or warden, and his deputy, were both present at this whipping. Witness says he once gave thirty-five lashes with a raw-hide on a man who simply, in one instance, would not do what he was told to do. Lawrence Van Buren, one of the keepers, says that there was a colored man in the prison, known positively to be crazy, and who, for the simple act of talking and making a noise in his cell, at night, was taken out on several successive mornings, and whipped until his clothes stuck in blood upon his body. A second instance is given in regard to Mr. Van Buren. For disobedience, in a solitary instance, said Van Buren kicked down and tramped upon a convict until he was unable to rise. Said convict, a day or two after, was kicked by said Van Buren until the convict's arm was broken. Prisoner died shortly afterward.

Jackson Urmy says that he had charge of the convicts in the lock and blacksmith shops, and that it was a common practice for Wilts, the contractor's agent, to pinch and pull the ears of the convicts, and by kicks and blows, in all possible ways, to abuse them. Witness testifies that he has seen from thirty to fifty lashes, with the cat, given on the backs of prisoners, for smiling and speaking to one another,

and always from ten to twenty strokes for looking off their work.

Witness further states that he has frequently seen guards inflict from twenty to forty strokes on a convict, and report but ten. Daniel W. Odell, guard for seven years, says that he knew a convict, named Judson, who effected an escape, but was recaptured, and then punished with six hundred lashes on his bare back. Three days subsequently, the prisoner committed suicide, by drowning himself. The same witness saw T. J. Carmichael strike a convict with an iron-bound rule, three feet long, upon the head; and the wound was so severe that he was confined many days to the hospital, before he was recovered sufficiently to work. Another guard, Peter R. Crum, has seen convicts cruelly beaten with canes, sticks, hoop-poles, etc., and this more than once.

A prisoner named Orange, in the Sing Sing prison, N. Y., once picked up a quarrel with a fellow-convict, and, in consequence, was ordered to the hall to be punished. The prisoner refused to go, alledging that he had been twice flogged already, and he had done nothing deserving punishment; for he was acting simply in self-defense; and said he would not submit himself to the lash without being allowed a word, and appealed to the warden. Upon this the guard struck him on the head with a club, and called for Mr. Eldridge. The prisoner was then granted five minutes to go to the hall; but still refusing, he was driven along at the point of the bayonet. The prisoner retreated and ran into his cell, where he was mangled by the bayonets, and shot in the wrist by the discharge of a pistol. The officers then caught the poor wretch by the feet, dragged him out, and tied him up, while three of them whipped him; and this concluded, they loaded him with irons and confined him in a close cell for eight months, allowing him nothing but bread and water.

I have given the reader the above as specimens of the

former mode of governing our penitentiaries and prisons While there was no humanity shown to the prisoners, there could of course be no reform; and the very method of treating them while in confinement served only to render them the more desperately wicked and dangerous when sent forth again into society. From these lamentable accounts given of prison discipline, the reader will readily perceive that the reformation of the criminal was a subject that never entered the minds of those with whom was the execution of the laws. Many benevolent men considered that the criminal deserved all this cruelty; for the curse of crime tainted his character, and the law secluded him from the public eye. Within the dungeon walls, the shrinking culprit found only a set of merciless beings, more abandoned than himself. It was a disgrace to our laws that such men were appointed to administer justice—men who gloried in their power and exercised it in such a licentious way.

Suppose the Creator should thus deal with his human creatures: what, I ask, would be the condition of man? All our race would ere now have been banished from his presence and shut up in hell. Such, however, is not the government of God; for, though we have sinned against him in a thousand times ten thousand ways, he mercifully bears with us. He conquers our rebellion, not by unkindness, but by his long-suffering and unexampled goodness. Let us, my readers, learn of him to be merciful, and to reclaim offenders by our love and forbearance.

Some hearts in all ages have beat with sympathy for the afflicted and the guilty. Since Howard's time, a new era has commenced. Societies have been organized in some of our larger cities, for the purpose of inquiring into the condition of prisons and improving their discipline. Such associations have been formed in Boston, New York, and Philadelphia; and already their influence has been felt. A better state of things is rapidly taking place. Legislators

have been awakened to the importance of securing a better discipline for prisons, and of requiring a more humane treatment of the prisoners. Legal enactments have been made to ameliorate the condition and improve the morals of convicts. Inhuman keepers have been dismissed from their places, and men of a different character appointed in their stead. The complete reformation of the guilty man is now one of the great objects of a benevolent community; but this reform is to be effected only by the power and influence of the Holy Spirit. Men may talk of bettering their condition by their own agency; but their efforts will be fruitless and barren. The criminal may be deterred by circumstances around him from committing vulgar crimes; but *grace alone*, by working a change in the heart, will accomplish a thorough reformation. The *means of grace* are, therefore, necessary, and should be fully allowed to every inmate of our state prisons.

Here let me express my views on this subject freely. And first: it appears to me that there is a great defect in our criminal code, which greatly retards the reformation of the prisoner—and this is the abuse of the pardoning power. Its frequent exercise seems to be almost absolutely necessary, however, in such cases as those where severe sentences have been pronounced on convicts for minor offenses: for example, ten years of hard labor for passing a few counterfeit dollars, or four years for stealing a young calf. Whenever the punishment is disproportioned to the crime there is a manifest injustice done; and it becomes a duty in the chief magistrate to exercise his pardoning power. Frequently the bearing of a prisoner at the bar upon trial has some influence upon the sentence of the court; and the "extenuating circumstances" are developed sometimes in the halls of justice which mitigate the rigor of the punishment. Few could believe that there is such a disparity in the length of the sentence for the same crimes, unless they

were acquainted with the usual course of judicial procedure, and were admitted to read the prison registers. The court should have discretionary power, of course; but the usual latitude they possess is too great. If the laws were so amended as to make all crimes, except manslaughter, arson, murder, and rape, punishable with confinement in the penitentiary from one to four years, and no pardon to be granted except upon the recommendation of the court where the criminal was tried, and from evidence of innocence in the person convicted, there would be much greater tendency to produce a reformation than under the present system, and prevent to a greater degree the commission of crimes. Under the present laws, from the time a man is convicted he is strongly encouraged to hope for pardon. His attorney and his friends tell him his confinement will be transient; but he lingers in the prison with the expectation of release, until "the hope deferred which maketh the heart sick" gives way to settled despair and gloomy melancholy. Had the prisoner no expectation of being pardoned when he entered the prison, no buoyant hopes would have been blasted—no bad passions would have been stirred up; but, with a contented spirit, he would have waited patiently until the hour which proclaimed the captive free. If one is pardoned it excites discontent in the others; and I have seen this prison so convulsed with this kind of excitement, that it seemed useless to make any efforts to calm them; and to labor with them so as to accomplish any good was impossible.

Again: there is now a great inducement to commit crime. Those who are inclined to perform wicked deeds reason thus: "If I do this thing I have three chances out of four that I will escape. If I am detected I may not be convicted; and if I am convicted I have friends, and they will interest themselves in my behalf, and I will be pardoned." Such are the fruits of this system. I have no

doubt that the best policy would be to pass light sentences and grant no pardons, except in cases where an innocent man is imprisoned. In this way only can a reformation be effected upon the criminal. If punishment were the sole object in confining a convict, prisons might be abandoned, and the whipping-post, the branding irons, and the pillory substituted in their place. The very name of penitentiary carries with it the object of its foundation—a place for the prisoner to learn the lessons of repentance and reformation. To accomplish this work the moral instructor should have the privilege of using the means of grace with the convicts, of preaching to them the Gospel, of reading the word of God, of holding with them social prayer meetings, and administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper to such as are qualified to receive them. Until this is sanctioned by the legislature and those who have the management of prisons, there will not be half the good accomplished as if it were tolerated and approved. Several men have applied to me for baptism, who, I had no doubt, had experienced a change of heart through faith in Christ; but I dared not administer the rite, for popular sentiment was against it. I have seen seasons of God's visitations in the conviction of those men, when, if I had been at liberty to call them to a mourners' bench or a prayer meeting, I have no doubt but several would have been converted.

When talking seriously of the communion of the Lord's supper, the prisoner has often been met with the objection, "But you are in a penitentiary, and public opinion is against you. You cannot participate in the full means of grace and the free blessings of the Gospel, because you have been a sinner." I trust in God that the day is not far distant when the penitentiary will become a place of glorious revivals, and thousands of convicts taste of the riches of grace, and go forth into the world, like the demoniac of

the tombs, in their right minds, to tell their families and friends what great things the Lord has done for them There is nothing to prevent this but the contracted views and prejudices which the managers and directors of prisons have of religion. They are afraid of a noise, or of their popularity—so much, that all things must be done just according to their own views and feelings. A cold harangue and long and tedious ceremonies will not awaken a sinner. The Gospel must be preached with the power and demonstration of the Spirit. All else will be but a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. Constituents should therefore say to their representatives, "Open the door to the captive, that he may enjoy the benefits of the Gospel of peace—that his chains may fall off, and he be set free by the power of the Holy Spirit. Let him have all the means of grace and the Gospel ordinances when he is prepared to receive them."

But there is another barrier in the way. Contractors have engaged the labor of these men for a stipulated sum, and their only object is to make money out of them. They are, therefore, pushed in their work often beyond what they are really able to do; and if the prisoner does not finish his task, he is reported to the overseer and then punished. These money-mongers—for so I must call them—will not allow the prisoner an hour to engage in a religious meeting, the whole week. Some of them do not believe the convict *can* be converted; and, in general, the directors and wardens are afraid of these moneyed contractors, who have power and influence with those in high standing. There is here a combined influence, it can readily be seen, against permitting convicts to enjoy the privileges of the Gospel. They are not granted time enough during the days of labor, unless they take it from the hours of sleep, to engage in their private devotions. The hours of labor, as well as the *amount*, should be limited by a public statute, so that the

remaining time could be spent in the cultivation of the morals and improvement of the mind. If the prisoners are employed in the service of contractors, eight hours in the winter and ten hours in summer should be all that is required of them for their daily work. Under existing arrangements they labor from sunrise to sunset. This overtasking them is little less than murder; and men who have the hardiest constitutions, in three or four years become prematurely infirm. Should his term of confinement now expire, the convict goes out unable to maintain a family, if he has one—if not, he can find no steady employment; and, without health, without clothes, except those he wore when he left prison, and without money, he must either steal, or beg, or go to the poor-house, all of which is opposed to his reform and his salvation.

I am satisfied that there must be an interest shown in these matters, or there can be but little done to reform the culprit. He must be treated as a man—must be admitted to all the means of grace, such as Sabbath schools, instructors, preaching, and the word of God. He must feel that he is at liberty to sing and pray at convenient seasons, and not be afraid of check or persecution.

I cannot leave this part of my work without repeating it, as my deliberate opinion, formed from three years of close observation, that long sentences for first and petty offenses exercise a deleterious influence in the reformation of the criminal. When a convict once conceives the idea that his punishment is greater than he deserves, either his malevolent feelings are aroused, or he is driven to despair, and often to a state bordering upon insanity. Facts prove that a large majority of those who become insane are those who have been sentenced for life, or who are condemned for twenty or thirty years. Such pine away without the hope of release. It is generally deemed an exhibition of humanity to sentence a murderer to imprisonment for life, instead

of death by hanging. This might be the case if the confinement of the criminal were such as to render his life a benefit to him; but when he is delivered to the safe-keeping of cruel men, who inflict unnecessary punishment upon him and load him with torture, death in its most ignominious form is far preferable. I must again express my conviction that three or four years of hard labor in prison is a very severe punishment; but, if any disbelieve the sentiment, I can only say, let them try the experiment and they will be convinced. Three years is long enough to effect a reform upon the criminal, if it can be effected at all.

The *certainty* of the punishment rather than the *severity* has undoubtedly the greatest influence in preventing crime; and just in the proportion that the pardoning power is abused will the law cease to be a terror to evil-doers; yet I must acknowledge that this power, under the present circumstances, has frequently to be exercised. The constant endeavors of the prisoner to be released from confinement render abortive every effort to reclaim him. Every letter he writes to his friends is filled with importunities for them to petition the governor for a pardon; and he is confident they will succeed. Some pretend to have been reformed, in order that their good conduct will further their prospects of release. If they find at last that all this is unavailing, they no longer cloak the wickedness of their hearts, but evince their disappointment by a total abandonment of themselves to the worst passions. Several cases of this kind have come under my own observation.

Of the officers of prisons.—In the reformation of the prisoner and the promotion of his welfare, as well as that of community, very much depends upon the selection of the warden and officers, or guards. It is certain that all the rules for the government of prisons and the reformation of the convicts, may be rendered inefficient by the incompetency and negligence of the officers to whom is intrusted

the immediate supervision of those placed under their charge. To secure the services of capable and faithful men is, therefore, an object of such primary importance, that upon it the success of all other plans of reform may be said to depend; and the services of such men cannot be secured unless the offices be made respectable, and, within certain limits, permanent in their tenure—that the official appointments should not be subject to political changes. If the officers of prisons are removed from party motives, it will be difficult to procure faithful and honest men for the discharge of these duties. The changes will be felt in every branch and department of the prison, and the experience of a longer or a shorter time will be lost in the triumph of one day. A good officer is liable to be removed to make place for a more favored political aspirant; and so the prison becomes the engine of political abominations or the pest-house of moral corruption. The person chosen for the office of warden ought to be a man of exalted benevolence, undoubted integrity, prompt decision, great firmness, deep penetration, and intimately acquainted with the human heart. He should be himself religious, or friendly to religion—an uncompromising foe to immorality—possessed of a gentle disposition, and kindness that will win the favor and command the respect of all. All the lower officers should be men of the same character.

Let but once these offices be filled with wicked, drunken, swearing, and gambling men, and all attempts at reform are defeated. They become the practical enemies of religion; and though for present purposes they may make a show of morality, yet they are inimical to reform in their hearts, and will exert a private influence to discourage convicts from seeking the power of godliness. Should a convict become serious, and endeavor to be religious, these men will try to rally him out of it, or, not succeeding in this, will have a peculiar watch in order to detect in him some trifling misde-

meanor for which to punish him. The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

Of the proceeds of convict labor.—There is too great an estimate set upon money as subserving the public interests. There is something degrading in the idea of a community endeavoring to enrich itself by the labor of the poor, unfortunate convicts. Not a cent of the proceeds of their labor should go to the treasury of any state, but all should be applied to the payment of the expenses incurred by their trial and their keeping. If any thing remains it should be devoted to their moral improvement, and the surplus given to the support of their families or their dependent parents. While the state realizes thousands of dollars over and above all its expenditures for the penitentiary from convict labor, the families of the prisoners often are starving at home, or are forced to beg their living on the streets. If such a disposition of these funds as above-mentioned were made, I know that there are many who would labor with a more cheerful heart.

Of the instruction of the convicts, etc.—The means of acquiring useful knowledge ought to be large and full. Libraries, of sufficient extent and variety to give a wide scope to thought and afford food for the mind, should be procured, and prisoners allowed free access to them at all proper times. Such a privilege is a step to refinement and self-respect. The study of history, biography, literature, and morals elevates and expands the intellect and purifies the soul. It strengthens the moral feelings, calls off the memory from brooding upon present afflictions, and opens a door for hope and prospective usefulness. This provision for the benefit of the prisoners has been shamefully neglected; and many, for the want of some opportunity to employ their minds, have become deranged. Like the body the mind must have nourishment; and if it cannot obtain that which will keep it strong and vigorous, it will

prey on itself, and sink down into a state of imbecility or morbid insensibility.

Every prison should be provided with a good library, and time given the prisoners to avail themselves of it, especially in the long winter nights. For this purpose the halls can be lighted with gas, or each cell furnished with a lamp. I incline to the latter method as being the cheaper and more convenient. When this is done there will appear a cheerfulness and vivacity among the prisoners hitherto unknown. Let but the avaricious contractors be kept from working the convicts to death, and they can go out into the world much better men than ever they were, and qualified for the duties of citizens and the responsibilities of social life.

Self-interest is the great stimulus to human exertion, and the cup of life must be mixed with it, if men are to act cheerfully and willingly in their daily toil.

There is a great defect in the prison arrangements concerning boys or young men; and these constitute a large proportion of the prisoners. As soon as they come, they are put to labor on some contract. The lighter work is assigned to them, such as making buckle-tongues, filing a stirrup or bridle-bit, filling quills for the loom, or shaving a piece of wood to make part of a saddle-tree. Thus the lad who has been led astray by wicked associates, and becomes a felon in the eye of the law, is lodged in the penitentiary for several years; and yet all this while has learned nothing by which to profit when he is released. He has been of great advantage to the contractor, but has not mastered a good trade to rely upon when he goes out into the world. He has no incentive then to industry and honesty. He suffers himself as well as the state; for he earns in prison about thirty-three cents a day, or, if not an able-bodied man, half this amount, of which it requires thirteen per cent. to feed and clothe him, exclusive of the payment of the guards, shop-rent, physician's charges, and loss of

time; so that finally the state gains nothing. In this way the contractor becomes rich; and while he has gained his thousands the unfortunate convict is sent out penniless. The law should regulate these contracts, so that the purchaser of them will be compelled to pay each of his employees a certain per centage on all his profits.

To show what a stimulus to labor a small allowance to the prisoner is, I will give a case: A contractor in the Ohio penitentiary offered one of the men on his contract two cents a barrel for every one he made over his regular day's work. By this he would receive one dollar for every fifty barrels; and at this price he labored until he had earned seventeen dollars and eighty-seven cents, which would be about nine hundred barrels of *extra* work. With this money I purchased the prisoner, for his own use, twenty-one volumes of good, useful books. This shows how great a stimulus a small pittance would be, if it were authorized by law.

If all the prisoners who are able to perform a good day's work were engaged at forty cents a day and expenses paid, out of which they should receive five cents if they labor faithfully, and nothing at all if they do a deficient day's work, the officers would have less trouble in obtaining the required amount of labor from the prisoners. The contractor as well as the prisoner would be a gainer by this plan. At the end of five years the convict would have the sum of seventy-eight dollars and twenty-five cents; and this would furnish him with decent clothes and give him a little start in the world.

Boys and young men ought to be put to some branch of mechanical business which would afford them a respectable living. I have heard a great deal said about the worthlessness of convict labor, and much grumbling on account of the very little done by prisoners; but I have seen no contractor who does not hold on to them with great pertinacity.

and is always anxious to increase the number. I have lived amongst them for three years, and I never saw men work harder or more constantly. There ought to be a thorough overhauling in this matter. The personal benefit of the convict as well as the good and safety of the community demands it.

It is unwise to expect devotion to any occupation without some object in view, or some personal interest to be subserved; for these lie at the foundation of all voluntary industry. Under the present law the convict derives nothing whatever for his ingenuity or his workmanship, and he, therefore, has no inducements to exertion. In the labor to which he is appointed his wishes are not consulted at all; and he is assigned some employment not always congenial to his taste, and one which gives him no scope for improving himself. He is thus cut off from all the leading motives which impel civil society. On the other hand there is no condition of life in which an act of kindness or an expression of sympathy is more deeply felt or more gratefully appreciated. A single word or look of pity bestowed upon one of these unfortunate creatures, weighed down as he is by the conviction of disgrace, will be engraven on his heart, and cherished for months or years with a constancy of gratitude known only by them upon whose ears the accents of consolation seldom fall. It is to *this* means that the prison authorities have to look for the security of their authority, and the obedience and industry of the prisoners. The consequences of the former discipline and the policy which has been so long prevalent—namely, that there is no hope of reforming a convict over eighteen years old; that fear is the only susceptibility which can be appealed to in their government; that no misdemeanor shall be forgiven, but in every case punished—can easily be told. Every page of the history of prisons under this iron administration is filled with the details of disobedience, desperation,

rebellion, and insanity among the convicts. All inducements to obedience and industry were withdrawn by the officers to whom they were subjected; their most sacred feelings were wantonly violated; and but one thing must follow such a treatment while human nature exists. Convicts will endeavor to extinguish in themselves those feelings which tend to aggravate their sufferings. When treated like brutes, they will naturally court the insensibility of brutes. They will become vindictive and revengeful, and take every opportunity to gratify their resentment by destroying the life or the property of their persecutors. They will labor, merely to escape punishment; and just as little as will secure this end. They will display as little skill as possible, in order to diminish the amount of labor and the profits of their overseers. They will occasion to their products whatever damage they suppose will be attributed to their ignorance or inexperience. Nor has it been, by any means, unfrequent for them deliberately to maim themselves in order to escape the tyranny of the shops. Now, in the sight of the experience of so many years, will it not be wickedness and more than folly to throw away the only incentive which can be offered to the convict for his industry and his labor—a kind and gentle treatment? Then let the officers of the prisons exercise that forbearance and mercy which the misfortunes of the prisoner entitle him to.

I cannot but mention another evil of our prison economy; and that is, the present mode of employing the convicts in the service of contractors. It introduces into the prisons a class of persons—either the contractors themselves or their agents—whose sole interest is their own pecuniary advantage. They naturally regard the prisoners as so much capital, to which they have an exclusive right, and they sometimes seem to think that the discipline and arrangements of the prison should be framed with exclusive reference to themselves. The regulations of the prison are good

or bad, just as their business is more or less profitable. Selfishness is so much more clamorous than benevolence, that its voice silences all other claims. The natural result is, that ability to labor, rather than moral worth, becomes the standard of excellence with the contractors and overseers.

Convicts have the same feelings as other men, and can be influenced by the same motives. This fact should be remembered by the officers of prisons; for it is always unjust to inflict unnecessary punishments and impose unnecessary burdens upon human beings. Man's better judgment and conscience will tell him so.

Here let me say something as to the effect the punishment of the lash has on those who are in the habit of inflicting it upon criminals and others. It has a deteriorating influence on all those who engage in it, and degrades all who become its ministers. It tends to the destruction of all honorable feelings in those who pursue it, as in the convicts who are the subjects of it. To morality, virtue, or praiseworthy sentiments, it has no affinity. Being exclusively the offspring of animal propensity, its unavoidable effect is to brutalize those who are daily concerned in it; and in exact proportion as it renders them animals, it makes them less men. It is a foe to benevolence, and, therefore, obliterates those finer sympathies and charities of human nature, which are among the most valuable safeguards to virtue. I never knew one who engaged in this work, but lost all that constitutes an amiable and good man.

The appointment of Wardens.—This matter has been too little attended to. Many candidates offer their services, and the character and qualifications of a man have but little weight in the selection. The one selected must belong to the dominant party in politics, and he may be the defeated candidate for some other office. He may not have a single qualification for so important a trust. The benefit of the inmates, or their reformation, may not enter into the account.

The very purpose of a penitentiary is at once defeated, because of the choice of an improper man for warden. It is most evident that a wise and judicious administration can only be had by the appointment of a man fitted by nature and habit for the important duties required in such a station

A mere political appointment affords no security that he can fill the place given him. Experience has clearly demonstrated this. Whoever, for the last twenty years, has watched the administration of prison discipline, cannot but have observed that the objects of imprisonment in the penitentiary have failed to a great extent. The security of the public, in the reformation of the prisoners, can never be made certain while the appointment of warden is a political thing and in the hands of political men. Who can help being convinced, that the power to elect the officers of prisons should belong to other men than time-serving politicians, if we would secure a proper administration of discipline, the reformation of the convict, and the security of society?

Duties of the Directors or Inspectors.—The duties of directors are limited. They have the appointment of the officers, and are required to look into the conduct of the warden and his management of the financial affairs of the prison, and examine his accounts. Since the public is very sensitive on the subject of dollars and cents, *this* is almost the only thing which occupies their attention. The trust confided to the directors should not be confined to the appointment of officers, and to dollars and cents; but they should be constantly observant of every thing that transpires within the walls.

The administration of the prison discipline is under their control, and the conduct of every officer should be subjected to a strict examination.

The manner in which the prisoners are worked by the contractors, or their agents, should be looked to, and no

imposition allowed to be practiced upon the helpless convict; since he has no means to help himself, except through the directors. The employment of a man may injure his health and endanger his life, if continued, and he has no redress. The contractors pay for his labor, and it must be done, kill or not kill.

Every regulation of the prison ought to be closely inspected by the directors, or else they will not have fully discharged their duty. The health, comfort, clothing, food, and treatment of the convict are intrusted to them, and to them only. Instead of visiting the prison but once in three months, and then in a very hurried manner, they should spend days at a time within its walls, and, as far as possible, become acquainted with the prisoners, their wants, and their treatment, and see that no abuses either of officers or contractors go unredressed. This is the only way in which prisons can be managed so as to accomplish the great purposes for which they were instituted. And a most rigid inquiry should be made into the reason why so many of the inmates of prisons become insane. There must be a cause for this, and it should be known; and I think it might be, if suitable measures were taken by the proper authority to discover it. It is lamentable to see so many men losing their reason; and a suitable apartment should be fitted up in every prison for their confinement, if they cannot be sent to the lunatic asylum. To see a fellow-being, deprived of his reason, shut up in a dark cell, and treated like a wild beast, is appalling to the sensibilities of a philanthropist and a Christian.

There is another thing which ought to be speedily remedied; and that is, incarcerating children in a penitentiary with old convicts. It is humiliating to see boys, of from thirteen to eighteen years of age, thus degraded. These children were led off in an evil hour by bad associations—perhaps from want of parents, or from training—who, by a

milder course of treatment, might have been reclaimed without being exposed to the disgrace of a state prison, and bearing it through all subsequent life. Instead of associating them with old and hardened criminals, they should be placed under the charge of good men, who will give them such instruction as will rescue them from vice and strengthen them in morality, store their minds with useful knowledge, and teach them some business by which they can sustain themselves honestly. Parents do not know how soon their own sons may be led into crime, and fall victims to evil habits, and become the inmates of prisons. Therefore ought they to insist that some other mode of treatment should be adopted for the youth and juvenile offenders. Let this matter be taken in hand and early concluded: we owe this to them and ourselves.

There are few things which have a more destroying influence upon the mind of the convict, than to feel that he is lost to his friends and relatives for ever. This is the last hope, "that if all the world casts me off and frowns upon me, I have yet a father, a mother, a brother, or sister, who sympathizes with me, and still feels for me, and will befriend me." Such is the constitution of human nature, that it cannot sustain itself if it have nothing to bear it up. If left without hope and friendship, the convict becomes wild, desperate, and deranged. It is a duty never to throw away a relative because he has gone so far astray as to become a felon and forfeit his liberty. It may be that the prisoner has relations who walk abroad guilty of much greater crimes than he himself—some whom all men respect, while they condemn the convict with disgrace. Our Lord gave this doctrine a very handsome reproof in the thirteenth chapter of St. Luke, speaking of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, and those upon whom the tower of Siloam fell: "Think ye that they were sinners above all men? I tell you, nay; but except ye repent, ye

shall all likewise perish." And in the tenth chapter and twenty-fifth verse of the same Gospel, the Savior holds a much more interesting conversation with a proud Pharisee lawyer with respect to the duty we owe to one another: "A certain man fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead." Reader, your own son, or husband, or brother, may be, by bad associations and evil habits, has fallen among thieves, who have stripped him of his good character and standing in society; till, covered with disgrace, he is thrust into prison. By remorse and a painful sense of his degradation, his wounds remain open, while his former friends and acquaintances go by on one side; and on the other pass his offended relatives, whose proud hearts are deeply pierced with the supposed disgrace brought upon them by one of their own family. It remains for some stranger to give comfort to the poor outcast, and pour into his wounds the wine and oil of their consolation. Now, let me ask, which will gain the most credit, and most enjoy the favor of the public, and best meet the Divine approbation—the parent, or brother, or sister, or connection, who, like the priest and the Levite, pass on the other side, or he who acts the part of the good Samaritan?

I have seen distress, bordering almost upon insanity, arising from the convicts' receiving no intelligence from their friends: and many have been the letters I have written to their friends, urging them to write, and give the prisoners some assurance that they are not lost for ever. I think it cruel to withhold from them this stream of mercy. A poor man in this prison had written again and again to his brother, and no answer had been received, until he was so depressed and cast down that he became almost distracted. I wrote to his brother, and reproved him severely for his want of kindness. In a short time a letter was received; and when I met the prisoner in the yard the

gloom had passed off his countenance, and he was in an ecstasy. "Father Finley," said he, "I have glorious news to tell you. I have got a letter from my brother, and he speaks kindly of me;" and then the tears flowed like drops of rain over his manly countenance. His brother had at last poured into his bosom the consolation he was dying to receive.

I have uniformly remarked that the prisoners, who have the sympathies of their friends, and who often receive encouraging letters from their relatives, are the happiest and most contented men, and, what is of more importance, are the most likely to reform; and the reason is simply this: the anchor of hope keeps their heads above water. Let the convict but once know that, if he reforms his life and conducts himself properly, his sins will not only be forgiven but forgotten, that when his term of confinement is expired his friends will receive him with open arms, and he has the greatest inducement to reform his character. Those who have a relative or friend in prison can be powerful auxiliaries in his reformation; and they should never let any length of time pass without writing to him.

There is a monstrous error in public sentiment, in regard to men who have been caught in some misdemeanor and thrust into prison, simply because they are thus stamped with disgrace for life. Men will not associate with them nor afford them any encouragement to obtain an honest living, but will frequently even discountenance them. Thus many are put to the necessity of stealing in order to sustain life. These sticklers about honorable standing in society may, and no doubt do, clasp to their bosoms men a thousand times worse than the convict, and yet, because they have never been detected in the commission of crime, are none the less guilty. Here is a man who, by inordinate love of gain, has been tempted to pass a counterfeit ten-dollar bill, or forge an order for ten dollars. He is arrested, and serves

from three to five years in the state prison. He is branded as a convict and treated with contempt. But there is your wealthy neighbor, who distills alcohol and vends the poisonous cup, filling his coffers with the groans of broken-hearted wives or the tears of starving children. Every beam and every brick in his house has been bought with the blood of his fellows. He has been the means of peopling the penitentiaries, poor-houses, and asylums. But while it is written in capitals over the gates of heaven, "No drunkard shall enter here," there are those who still persist in entailing misery and death upon their fellows; and yet they pass for "respectable men." God forbid that they should be so considered by the sober-minded part of community!

There is no estimating the evil done by such men; and, if actions were measured by their consequences, this respectable vender of liquid poison would be in the prison, suffering alike with the victim of his cupidity. But habit blinds the understanding, perverts the judgment, and reconciles man to many absurdities. It is related of Bonaparte that, as he was walking over the field of battle immediately after an action, amid the screams and groans of the dying, he saw, unmoved, the wife of a soldier weeping over his dead and mangled body; but when he saw a faithful spaniel howling over the corpse of his master, he burst into tears. The first spectacle he could survey calmly, but he could not resist the second. Just so it is with the community. They can hang a man for taking the life of another, or send him to the state prison for stealing a calf; but the rumseller may slay thousands upon thousands, and yet be a clever, good man. May God have mercy upon our iniquities!

If the great object of imprisonment is to protect community and reform the convicts, the purest moral example should always be before them. To make the prisoners labor on the Sabbath will lessen the force of all teaching; for there is no more fruitful source of crime than the dese-

cration of the Lord's day. To require of them on this day to shave the guards, cut hair, black shoes, and perform such offices is very detrimental to their reform, and ought never to be permitted by the superintendent, or warden. The keepers should never be allowed to trade with them; and if they engage a prisoner to do any work for them, they ought in every case to be compelled to do him justice. I have known some transactions of this sort, where justice was not rendered, and much dissatisfaction was caused, and the prisoner rendered unhappy or revengeful. No man is fit to be a keeper, unless he be honest. Contractors and their agents often do much harm by their oppression and contemptuous treatment. Sometimes they are very pompous and tyrannical in governing; and thus they provoke resentment and stir up every evil passion. There are few men in this world who are fit to govern; and no man is calculated to be a ruler who has not learned to be a subject. If, then, the object of imprisonment is to be attained, care must be had in the selection of those men for officers, by whose example and precepts the convicts can be taught and trained in virtue.

And now, in closing my remarks on prison discipline and what should be done to reform the prisoner, of all things it is most desirable with a discharged convict that he should not feel his hold on society is lost, and that he is to be discarded and shunned, now that he has passed the penalty of the law and is restored again to the world. If the respectable man shuns him and treats him with disrespect, he will shun the respectable man, and seek society among the profligate and abandoned, and perhaps be driven to the haunts of vice. A prison life has not destroyed his social nature. He cannot live alone in the world; and if he has made good resolutions and determined to lead a virtuous life, how chilling and disheartening must be the frowns and repulses of the good! He must have great firmness, if he can sustain this coldness and contempt.

Prisoners are not always worse for having been prisoners, nor are they always the most guilty men. Many kind and generous hearts are found among them; men of talents and enterprise, who become reformed, and leave prison as worthy of confidence and encouragement as the reformed inebriate. If the principles which have been so successfully applied to the drunkard were applied to the prisoner, there would be fewer relapses into crime, and fewer recommitments. A man is now sometimes glad to return to prison to avoid the hostilities of the world, and to obtain those means of subsistence which he cannot always procure abroad.

The reform in prison discipline should discard all party-colored garments, the lock-step, and the shaven head Confidence should take the place of suspicion with all except the incorrigible, who ought, by some means, to be separated from the others, that their contaminating influence may be avoided. The sentences of the law are lenient compared with the practice in some prisons. To be confined to hard labor is far less degrading than the discipline which keeps upon a convict the evidence of his humiliation, in the very dress which he wears. He is constantly subjected to the want of good food, the violence of petty officers, the disgusting garments, the filth of the damp cell, and the vermin which infest his bed. *This* is a much severer punishment than the sentence of the law, and this is the condition of things which calls loudly for a reform; and I hope that the time has now come in which it can be effected.

It is reasonable that the prisoner should have every comfort compatible with his situation. It is a far greater suffering to have a deficiency of food, or food of a bad quality, than to do the labor imposed upon him. Who does not prefer to work all day, rather than sleep all day on a bed infested with vermin of every sort? These inflictions form

no part of his sentence, and if he suffers these, his punishment, by far, exceeds the amount prescribed by law. Give him good food, frequent ablutions, clean beds, kind treatment, religious instruction, friendly advice, the comforts of a pure atmosphere, and the blessings of the clear light of heaven—none of which are forbidden by law—and they will make his situation comfortable, and will influence his life and conduct through all coming time.

CHAPTER XXI.

Conversion of a female prisoner—A termagant—A splendid sight—Disquiet of the convicts—Interception of a letter—Its full details—Folly of attempting to escape—Letters from liberated convicts—A spirited epistle—A second from A. C.—Letter from J. D.—Letter from J. A. B. S.—Letter from L. G.—Letter from J. M. G.—Letter from a converted man—A piece of poetry—Close of the week.

The present day (Sabbath, September 13) was a day to be remembered. It *will* be remembered by many a soul. We had a large company of visitors. I spoke from Acts iii, 19.

About three o'clock, I called together, for the first time, those prisoners who had made a profession of religion since I was appointed chaplain to the prison. They were, indeed, all who made any such profession at all, so far as I know. After receiving and seating them, I formed them into a religious class, somewhat according to the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was, truly, a very glorious spectacle—such a spectacle, I imagine, as no prison ever witnessed since the days of Paul and Silas. The experiences given in by the converted convicts were, in every case, clear and conclusive, and in some intensely thrilling. Could the reader have looked in upon them, and seen their pale countenances lighted up by the beams of hope, and beheld the tears of joy running down their cheeks, and heard the shouts of thanksgiving and the songs of triumph sent up from the bottom of their hearts, it would have inspired his own soul with unearthly feelings. Captain Bradford, the deputy warden, who was present with us, declared that he had never dreamed of the power of the Gospel, till he saw these prisoners praising God.

We have now made the beginning of a Church within the walls of this gloomy prison. We have no sectarian

organization, in any respect whatever; so that my successor, to whatsoever denomination he may belong, will find every thing perfectly open and facile to his hand. While both he and I would wish to see the great principles of Christianity taking root among these men, neither, provided we are persons of even moderate common sense, would think of introducing any peculiar system into such a place as this.

I was now called to visit the female department. A woman there had sent for me. I went and found her in a high state of enjoyment. She had been seeking religion for several months; and she now believed that God had pardoned all her sins, and adopted her into his family. Her companions were weeping around her. She was, evidently, a different woman from what she had been.

Monday, September 14. To-day a woman, the perfect opposite of the one last-named, defied all the officers, and even swore that God never made the man able to conquer her. The guard brought her some victuals.

"Go and feed the devil!" said the woman.

"No," replied the officer, "I would rather starve him, and feed you."

"Well, eat it yourself, then," she responded.

"No, I would have you eat it, for you have eaten nothing to-day," answered the guard.

The woman caught a heavy tin dipper and hurled it with all her might and fury at the guard's head; but he stooped and evaded the missile. She then rushed to a pitched battle; but it was of short duration. The warden ordered her to be locked up in her cell; and, as I stood by the door of it, I heard her pray God to send her immediately to hell, which, she said, was a better place than a penitentiary. Such was this abandoned woman—an example of the truth often spoken, that woman, when degraded, is far worse than man. She was not deranged, but demonized.

Tuesday, September 15. I sallied out quite early this morning, without any definite plan of procedure, but with an eye out for any sort of adventure among my people. I found that many were disquieting themselves by plans of escape. A letter had just been intercepted, which a prisoner had written to his wife; and, that he may see how foolish is the hope of some, while the plans of others are full of genius, I will furnish the reader with the letter, by which he can form his own judgment of the less intellectual of our convicts:

"*Ohio Penitentiary, September* 13, 1846.

"My Dear Wife,—I take this opportunity of writing to you a few lines to let you know I am well; and I trust these will find you well. I have been expecting you for two months, and longing to see you, but in vain. I have a plan—if you cannot get me pardoned—to make my escape. I want you to get a two-horse wagon, well covered, and send it here to work at drawing saddle-tree stuff, or hoop-poles. I am employed in carrying staves and the litter from the cooper shop; and I can get in the covered wagon and go out of the gate at any time. Get Moses to come with his team. Teams are coming in and going out every hour. He will not have to work here more than three or four days before I shall be free as a bird. Be careful who you make a friend of; and when Moses comes in with a load, let him keep close to the north wall, then east to the east wall. When he turns to go back, let him drive between the blacksmith shop and the cooper shop. If Moses does not come, you had better come with the person you may get. You must come to the prison that I may see you; and this shall be a sign that the plan is ready. I want you to bring my clothes, my big rifle, with the molds and flask, and my watch. Fix another pair of pants; for a man will go out with me. Make me a pair of pants of that gray cloth, if you have it. Bring some

money. As soon as we get out, we can send you a plenty to live upon. Buy me two cheap caps, and bring an old coverlet to throw over me in the wagon. Do not bring the clothes to the prison, but hide them in the woods where we can easily find them. I have no doubt about our getting out in this way; and if you are not along, when I can I will send for you.

"Your husband, D. G."

This, reader, is a specimen of the ill-contrived plans which are constantly in progress, or in conception, among the more ignorant, and stupid, and uneasy of our convicts. Such a plan, of course, would be sure at any time to prove a failure; but some of these fellows have no more sense than to think that they are not watched narrowly every step they take. Because the guard appears to be careless, and they do not see his eye following them everywhere, they imagine they are not noticed; whereas they cannot be gone two minutes longer than usual from their place, or on any out-door duty, without awakening immediate suspicion.

Wednesday. I have to-day been reading letters sent me from prisoners who have obtained their liberty. They are exceedingly interesting to me, who knew the authors of them within these walls, where their spirits were greatly depressed within them. To obtain liberty, after being incarcerated for years in such a place as this is, is enough to throw life and animation into any man. Some of these letters are examples of the effect of this change of situation; others are more sober; while all are interesting for peculiar traits and circumstances. The reader who has seen these men in prison, may be pleased to follow a few of them, as specimens of the rest, into the great world toward which they have had, while confined, such ardent longings; and I will, therefore, lay before him a few of the numerous communications sent me from various sections of the country. I trust the reader will overlook the allusions made to myself

in them, or remember the explanation already given of the reason why they make such allusions; and I must, in justice to myself, remark, that, not only now, but throughout the volume, I have selected such matter as would least offend against propriety in this particular.

The following letter is full of animation. It is given in the words of the original, which, in fact, could be hardly bettered:

"*New York, Oct.* 10.

"Reverend Sir,—I improve the present opportunity of writing you a few lines, believing that you take an interest in my welfare, that will always render a relation of my doings and whereabouts matters acceptable when you have no weightier affairs to engross your time or attention.

"It is one month this day since I left Columbus, and the exciting scenes and changes I have passed through in that interval have been almost sufficient to serve an ordinary individual a lifetime. My journey across the mountains was as pleasant as ordinarily occurs in summer; our coach was not too much crowded, and our company seemed to manifest a disposition to make the most of circumstances, and by a spirit of amenity and good fellowship render themselves mutually agreeable.

"The third evening after leaving Columbus I was floating upon the bosom of the broad Chesapeake Bay, and in a few hours coursing up the Delaware. These were places that have long been familiar to me. I bared my head to the ocean breeze, and welcomed its rude caresses as those of an old friend I had known, long since, in earlier and happier days, ere sorrows and misfortunes had blighted the brightest and fairest hopes that fancy had beguiled the onset of my career in life with, and ere experience had taught me that faithful and truthful lesson, that man is doomed to disappointments; that the spectre of uncertainty is a constant attendant through life; first hovering over his cradle

slumbers, then darkening the warm noon of his manhood, and accompanying him in the evening of his decline.

"Language, sir, is inadequate to describe the mingled feelings and emotions I experienced. For more than five years I had been an alien from the world and the friends in whose embraces a few hours would place me. Now I was as free as the breeze that came joyously careering across the moonlit wave, to welcome me again to the scenes I had known in earlier and happier days. Memory was busy in reviving the past, with its brilliant lights intermingled with its dark and sombre clouds. You recollect the old proverb: 'Out of the fullness of the heart the mouth speaketh.' I, sir, afforded no exemplification of the truth of this assertion. My heart was too full for speaking; and tears alone, warm, gushing tears, were all that could relieve its swelling emotions.

"I arrived in Philadelphia early on Sunday morning; and, as I had not slept since leaving Columbus, I went to bed and obtained a few hours' rest previously to calling upon my brother. I found him and his family in good health. My advent amongst them on Sunday seemed to take them somewhat by surprise; yet it was one of a joyful character; and in their happy home I soon ceased to think of the privations of the past.

"I remained there near ten days, and came on to New York, which I find the same busy, bustling babel, I have always known—still growing in size, and increasing in population, until it will rival its sisters of Europe. I find that my business has suffered much during my absence; so much so that I find it imperatively necessary to engage in active business to insure an honorable livelihood. This, however, is no hardship to me, as idleness would never comport with my ideas of propriety, believing the just and beneficent Creator has wisely ordained labor as an essential requisite, in order to enjoy and appreciate the blessings he bestows as

a reward. And, happily for me, my philosophy of temper still stands as a friendly aid to sustain me in this time of disappointment; and in looking about me I can see thousands I believe are worse off than I am, and the number is very few that I would really exchange situations with.

"Now do not imagine that I am getting pharisaical, and in any way striving to exalt myself above my fellow-men; but I rather feel, if I know my own heart, that the all-wise Being who created me has purposes in view that it is no part of my business to attempt fathoming; and resignation, with a contented and perfect reliance upon his goodness, leaves the mind much freer to enjoy the blessings of life, than a fretful and peevish temperament, constantly murmuring and repining at its unfortunate lot, can ever bestow. I am one of that class of men that always feel a disposition to make the most of life, and, in whatever situation I may be placed, endeavor to render myself as happy and contented as circumstances will allow. It is no spirit of bravado that induces me to assert that I was even happy in the situation in which our acquaintanceship first commenced. True, I was in a situation where the world generally suppose hope can never enter; and my name was branded with opprobrium and disgrace. I knew it was unmerited; that misfortune, not crime, had placed me there; and that truth would some day appear in my vindication before the world. With that consciousness, I was in some degree contented; and in contributing to alleviate the miseries and sufferings of my fellows in misfortune, I experienced the high gratification that conscious rectitude of purpose and exalted benevolence in the cause of suffering humanity can alone bestow. I even in that place had seasons of pure enjoyment and true happiness. And when life draws near to its close, and the scenes of time begin to mingle with those of eternity, I know not that the remembrance of the time there spent will occasion one pang of regret. To the best of my

feeble abilities, I endeavored to render strict justice to all, in the discharge of my duties; and if I in any instance failed in so doing, it was an error of judgment, and not of feeling or intention.

"I shall always be happy to hear from you and learn the success that attends your labors in your situation there, and take a deep interest in the welfare of those so lately my unfortunate companions.

"I am anxious to know how the library and hospital department progress. You will be sure to receive a valuable accession to the book department from me, most probably during the next month.

"Give my respects to all my friends about the institution, and elsewhere in the vicinity, particularly the warden and family, Mr. M'Elvain; and do not forget General Patterson and family, as I suppose you see them often. I would like to be remembered to all my companions in adversity. Of the propriety of this request, however, you must be the judge, as I am ignorant of the rules and regulations at present existing. For yourself you will be pleased to accept my thanks for past kindness; and believe me to be, ever, your sincere friend and well-wisher, A. C. F."

The next communication is from a person who had awaked a great deal of sympathy and kindness in the public before his liberation:

"*Cincinnati, Dec.* 14.

"Dear Sir,—I take this opportunity of informing you that at this present time I am in the enjoyment of good health, having met with no misfortune since my exit from confinement. I feel in duty bound to raise my heart in grateful prayer and praise to the Giver of all good for his unbounded and unmerited goodness to so vile, so unworthy a wretch.

"Arrived in Cincinnati, I forthwith waited upon Mr. G. To my surprise I met with rather a cool reception. Since

we last met, Mr. G. had formed a very unfavorable opinion of all liberated prisoners. Having had frequent opportunities of observing the profligate and licentious conduct of some who have been liberated, he very naturally came to the conclusion, that they were unworthy of trust. I sought employment the remainder of the day, without being able to find any. This was my first night in Cincinnati. I retired to rest somewhat disheartened. After commending myself to the all-wise and benevolent Creator of all, and the enjoyment of a night's rest, the morning's dawn found me again in pursuit of employment. About ten o'clock this day, when least looking, and almost ready to abandon the hope of obtaining employment at my trade, the Lord saw fit to crown my efforts with success; and I am at present at work on Front-street, above Pike. I have called three times to see Dr. E., but have not seen him, owing to his absence from town. Remember me to all my friends and well-wishers; but more especially to those who took so active a part in procuring my release from those gloomy walls. Mr. G. sends his esteem and best wishes to Mr. B., and all inquiring friends.

"May these few lines find you in that degree of health which is so necessary for bodily comfort! But, above all, may you be in the constant enjoyment of spiritual life and health! Be not weary in laboring for the spiritual health and comfort of those who, through Divine goodness, forbearance, and long-suffering, are still left to your guidance and guardianship; and may the God of peace, truth, and righteousness bountifully reward you, both in time and eternity! Again permit me to crave an interest in your prayers.

"Permit me to subscribe myself, your most obedient and unworthy servant, A. C."

The third is from an individual in good condition in the world, who, by the way, is supposed never to have

committed the crime for which he was punished. It reads as follows:

"*February* 26.

"Reverend Sir,—You will excuse the liberty I take in thus addressing you; but I am satisfied that I can never repay you for the interest you took in my behalf, whilst a prisoner. Language would fail to repay your kindness and assiduity, in a temporal as well as a spiritual point of view I am confident that those persons that you have charge of will bless you whilst they live, unless some of them are given over to hardness of heart. May God, in his infinite mercy, accompany your preaching, until there is not one left to advocate the cause of sin or Satan, but until all shall turn to God, who alone can comfort them under their present circumstances!

"For my own part, I can truly say, that I can never forget your preaching. Every day I talk and think about you. I have seen you in my dreams as plain as if you were present. I think you pray for me sometimes. I have prayed without ceasing, since I saw you; and when I pray, you are always present. O, sir, I hope and trust you will pray for me! I have not joined the Church yet, but I will the first opportunity that I have; and I hope ever to live the life of a Christian, by the help of God's grace. I believe I have more friends now than I ever had. The people are satisfied, with the exception of those persons who took a very active part against us, or those who swore against us. When we returned home, we were greeted by our friends, and upward of two hundred of our fellow-citizens, who welcomed us home, and passed many resolutions in regard to our persecution and afflictions. I hope God will forgive my enemies, and bring them to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ.

"You will please give my best respects to Captain Bradford and Mr. Sallow. I hope, when you have time, you

will write me a few lines. It would give me more satisfaction than almost any thing else. I am much gratified to learn that the prisoners' cells will be lighted up after night; also, that that awful lock-step is abolished. I think, if you continue for some years longer, you will make that prison a blessing, in place of a curse. I hope God, in his infinite mercy, will give you many happy days to live, and many souls for your hire. Mr. S. and family are well. He says he will write you soon. He is entirely reformed. He has never tasted any kind of ardent spirits since he came out. He has for ever shaken hands with King Alcohol. Mr. S. is also well, and has commenced practicing in the same neighborhood. Direct to Millinersville, Guernsey county. No more; but I remain yours, respectfully, until death, J. D.

"P. S. I have seen in my last week's paper, that there was a bill before the upper house to relieve me from the costs of the prosecution, and also a number of petitioners to the Legislature to that purpose; but I do not think a bill will pass this session, but I hope it will finally pass. I also see there has been nothing done for some time, owing to the split in the senate. You will please write me when you have time."

The fourth letter, though short, exhibits a spirit felt by many convicts after their liberation:

"*New Orleans, La., December* 11.

"Reverend and Dear Sir,—Before leaving Columbus, I received a letter from my friends, stating that they were all still alive, and enjoying good health, and their great joy in hearing of me, and pressing me to come home. My intention was to go home, when I left Columbus; but, taking every thing into consideration, I thought best to work in this place some six or seven months first, so as to be able to pay my debts, and go genteelly home. I landed here on the twelfth day of November, and commenced

work on the thirteenth of the same month, at ten dollars a week clear of all expenses, save washing—cash every Saturday night.

"I am enjoying excellent health, and, with the blessing of God, will do well. I think about the first of June next I will return home. Remember me at the throne of grace. I want to make every day a day of preparation for eternity I know my time here is near a close.

"Give my best wishes to Mr. and Mrs. Dewey and Capt. Bradford. Please write to me and let me know how you are all getting on, and accept my most heart-felt thanks and best wishes.

"Your very humble servant, JAMES A. B. S."

The father of a large family, and, with the exception of the disgrace of imprisonment, always a very respectable man, and now a very good man, though illiterate, is the author of the following letter:

"*Brown County, State of Ohio, September* 19.

"HONORED AND REVEREND SIR,—As I have just been reading in my paper—the Advocate—and seeing your name mentioned so often, I felt that, by the help of God, I must write you a few lines to let you know a little about my health and the health of my family. As it respects my health, it has not been good since harvest; but I thank God it is no worse than what it is. I believe that working so hard in the hot sun, and not being used to it, was the cause of it. I have something like the dyspepsy; but I thank God that I am able to work a little to support my family, for just a few weeks ago I got through a job of work of building a mill, at one dollar per day. A few days since I sowed twelve acres of wheat and barley, and I have as much more to sow if my blessed Master will enable me to do it. My two oldest boys are sick at this time with the chills and fever. My companion and the rest of my family are in good health, and send their best love to you with

hat of your humble servant, hoping that these few indifferently-written lines will find you and yours, and all my friends about that place, enjoying good health of body and peace with God.

"Father Finley, God, through his bountiful goodness, has wonderfully blessed your unworthy brother. My wife has a fine son, born on the fourth day of August. We call his name James W. Finley G. I hardly ever look at the child but I think of you, hoping, if it is the Lord's will to spare him to be a man, that he may be a good one. I have wished often that you could see him.

"This is the third letter I have written to you. I have received but one from you and one from Gen. John Patterson. He mentioned you in his letter. This was a great comfort to me to hear from you, unworthy as I feel myself in that respect. You will please write a few lines to your unworthy servant, and let me know how you are getting along with my brethren, and let me know how many of them have turned out on the Lord's side, and how many prisoners altogether. You will please excuse me for not writing sooner.

"We have had some good meetings among us, and especially at our class meetings. I am sorry you did not send brother Holmes back to us again; but still I hope that we will have good preachers on our circuit. My old father-in-law is dead. He was struck with the palsy, and died on the 18th of August; and I am afraid he died as he lived, for he did not like to talk on the subject of religion; so it is unknown to me what was in his heart, for part of the time he was speechless; therefore I dare not judge.

"I hope you do not want a line to assure you of the love I have for you, for I do love God and all his people. May the Lord almighty bless you and strengthen you in your old days, and enable you to do much good in that place: and may he also reward you in blessings that are far supe-

rior to gold or silver, for your kindness toward me, a poor, unworthy worm of the dust! You will please excuse the shortness of my letter and my bad spelling, as it is seldom I write.

"As poor, weak a creature as I am, yet, glory be to God! I still feel encouraged to pray on, for I do know that there is a reality in religion, and I have no desire in the least to turn back to the beggarly elements of this world; nor do my companion and children, as far as I know. I must come to a close. We all join in love to you all, and all the Israel of God, and my sincere prayer is, that if we never meet again in this world, we may all meet in heaven, there to praise God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

"L. G."

If any man thinks our officers, by rough discipline and bad usage of their charge, get the ill-will of the prisoners, the following, which is only one out of hundreds, will correct the misapprehension:

"*Hillsboro, March* 11.

"Rev. J. B. Finley,—After my respects to you, my father in the Lord, I feel thankful that I am favored with the privilege of writing a few lines to you, to let you know my circumstances. I am well and hearty, and I hope when these lines come to hand they may find you enjoying God's favor in like manner. When I left Columbus I came straight here before I tried for work; and when I got here I had no trouble in getting work. I am working at cabinet-making with a nice man, who is a member of the Methodist Church, and is called a very respectable man; and when I determined to work for him I told him that I had just got out of the state prison, and that I did not want to deceive any one, for I thought that the truth was the best, and he commended me for it. And he says that he wants me to live with him four or five years if I will, and I have concluded to take him up. And now I must inform you that

I have joined the Church, and I have enlisted for the whole war; and I want you, if you please, to tell my fellow-prisoners not to put off the great things of eternity, for now is the best time that they will ever have; and if a man gets religion while he is there, then he is prepared to go into society, and the community at large receives him with joy. I want you tell them for me, that I send them my love. You will please to give my compliments to the warden and my kind officers, one and all; kind, I call them, for such they were, and I shall always respect them for their behavior to me; and I want you to write to me as soon as you get this, and let me know how you are. Nothing more at present, but I remain your son in the Lord until death; and if we shall never meet in this world, I hope we shall meet in heaven above. JAMES M. G."

The world would not suppose, I presume, that such a gloomy place as the Ohio penitentiary would be a place at all congenial to the muses; but some of the convicts do, occasionally, make attempts at belles-lettres compositions, and even to pay court at the airy portals of poesy. I have seen quite a number of poetical pieces, of no mean merit, from the hands of different convicts; but the most of them, if not all, were written for friends at home, and are now beyond my reach. Several hymns have been produced here, and sung by the prisoners, which would not dishonor the fame of many a literary spirit; but I have not one of them now by me. The following poetical sketch is the only one that happens to be now in my possession; and, without claiming too much for it, I think the reader will say, that he has seen worse poetry in some of our most popular literary magazines.

The prevailing characteristics of the periodical poetry of the times is mere rhyme, or jingle, without sense or connection. I do not say this to discourage any one who is a poetaster from using his quill on foolscap, if he feels so

disposed. I only state it as a fact, with which many are painfully conversant. But here follows the article:

PAST AND FUTURE.

BY A PRISONER.

Full twenty years from thee have fled,
To join the ocean of the past;
And each has left, while on it sped,
Some token that through life will last—
A memory of good or ill.
Unlike the ones that most we meet,
They linger in the bosom still—
The bitter mingled with the sweet;
Nor time nor distance can efface
The feelings twenty years will trace.

What airy castles hope has formed,
And gilded with a sunbeam's ray!
How oft hath fervid fancy warmed
O'er joys that in perspective lay,
Till all around enchantment seemed,
Like Eden's bright and sinless bower!
Such happy dreams are often dreamed
In youth and childhood's sunny hour,
Ere dark and blighting sorrows come,
And Hope, affrighted, leaves her home.

When twenty years again shall bring
Time's ever-changing scenes to view,
Hope still may soar on tireless wing,
To paint a future bright for you;
But where will then the friends be found,
That greet thee now in joy and mirth?
Perchance in church-yards' hallowed ground
They slumber with their mother earth;
But grant to all it may be given
To meet with Thee at last in heaven!

Thursday. I spent this day in visiting the different shops and the hospital.

Friday. This day was given to the sick.

Saturday. Being somewhat indisposed, I took the day for rest, for reading, for meditation, that I might be the better prepared for the solemn responsibilities of the coming Sabbath.

CHAPTER XXII.

Sermon—Counterfeiting—Recognition of a former convict—Inquiring friends—Father Mitchell—The Sabbath school—Introduction of Longking's Notes—Death of a female convict—An accident—An opportunity for escape unimproved—The Sabbath—A sad story—Discharge of six prisoners—Two cases of interest—Return of a youth—Morning meditations—Quotation from Charles Wesley—Hopeless death of a prisoner—News from a prisoner in Santa Fe—Two convicts in Columbus on a visit—Christmas—The New Year—More departures—Stealing a dollar—Sermon—Schedule from an officer of the prison—A rebellion—Recapture and return of a deserter—Letter from a convict—Female depravity—The Sabbath—An old sinner—Liquor-selling—An intelligent prisoner—Mother and Son—Conclusion.

Sabbath, September 20. A day of great power among all the prisoners. I preached from Luke xiii, 6: "A certain man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard," etc. The attendance of visitors was very large, and scarcely an eye was left unmoistened, either amongst them or the poor convicts.

Monday morning, Sept. 21. I held an interview with a prisoner, who made some astounding revelations to me respecting the methods and the men employed in counterfeiting.

Monday, 28. I started for Cincinnati, where I arrived on Tuesday. I met here with one of my prison converts. He is in the path of duty, and is doing well. From his pastor I learned that he had been admitted on trial in the Methodist Episcopal Church. May God bring him to the rest of the faithful in heaven!

Numerous persons, principally relatives of prisoners, visited me to-day, making inquiries about sons and brothers, fathers and husbands, who were in the prison at Columbus. I talked with them, and gave them all the information in my possession; but O, what sorrow, what marks of grief were written in their countenances, and how even did they feel the disgrace of their relatives, as question after question they asked me!

While in the city I met with that venerable man of God, Rev. Samuel Mitchell, father of our ex-Book Agent, Rev. John T. Mitchell, of Cincinnati. He left Virginia, where his early life was spent, on account of his opposition to slavery. He now lives in Platteville, Wisconsin. He was fifty years a local minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and is now about eighty-six years old, having been sixty-five years a child of God and Methodism. He was the well-tried and well-beloved friend of Bishop M'Kendree. His heart and his feelings are still true to the Church of his early choice.

Monday, Oct. 5. Started to see my family, from whom I had been separated over ten weeks. Found them all well, and trusting in God. After a brief stay I returned to my charge, at Columbus, where I arrived, and was received with undisguised welcome and affection.

Sabbath, Oct. 18. I introduced Longking's Questions and Notes into our Sabbath school, which proved a great help to us. No one can conceive the great advantage our school has been to the prisoners. An eloquent address on temperance, by Samuel Galloway, Esq., Secretary of the state of Ohio, was delivered to-day. It made a deep impression.

Tuesday. To-day I fell into a conversation with a young man, a native of North Wales, Europe. He related to me, in detail, the history of his life—the substance of which was, that his mother dying when he was quite small, he was put under the care of some of his relatives. His father left for Liverpool, while he remained in Wales, to grow up as he pleased. He soon got to stealing, was detected and whipped, and then sent to his father, in England. Here he became no better; but kept up his practice of thieving. He finally stole some money from his father, ran off from home, and shipped for America. Here his old habits followed him, and for some crime against our laws he found a lodgment in this prison. This, my young friends, you see

is the regular way to disgrace and ruin. No man sins his life and liberty away all at once. It is a gradual work; and not until a man is at the end of his course of iniquity is he willing to look back at the commencement. Beware of the beginnings of evil.

Wednesday. Mrs. D. died to-day. Poor woman! She was the worst of her species. I have frequently heard her say that she would much rather be in hell than in the prison. And, dreadful to admit, she is reaping the desire of her heart in that world where "the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched."

Thursday. One of the prisoners barely escaped with his life to-day. The crane at the stone quarry fell, with an immense stone, a distance of thirty feet, into the pit; and incredible as it may seem, but one man of all those engaged in the quarry was injured. His head and body were mangled shockingly. One of the prisoners ran for the doctor, and then *three* miles, alone, to the prison for help. He could easily have escaped; but it appears that he had no disposition to avail himself of the opportunity. He is a clever, good-natured, and sober man; and if any one merits a pardon, he does most unquestionably.

Sabbath, Nov. 1. A day of great peace to my soul. The Lord of hosts was with us in the preaching of his word.

Tuesday. I conversed with a boy named S., respecting his moral condition and early education. He stated that he became an orphan at the age of two years. Thus alone in the world, and with none to care for him but strangers, he grew up ignorant and irreligious. At the age of eighteen he could not read a chapter in the Bible. In the neighborhood where he lived were two men who were always quarreling with each other. One morning, as he was sauntering toward school, one of these men met him, and told him that he would give him a young horse and fifty dollars in cash.

if he would set his hated neighbor's house on fire. "This,' said the young man, "through the persuasion of the man, was more than I could refuse. A good horse, saddled and bridled, with fifty dollars in money, was an immense fortune in my eyes. So, without any reflection upon the crime I was committing, I rushed into the house, which at the time was vacant, and fired the kitchen. Not until the whole house was in flames did I feel the enormity of my guilt. My conscience then arose like a giant, and I felt as though a mountain was pressing on me. The wretch who instigated me to the deed now offered me more than the original sum of money if I would not tell on him. But, no—the truth, the whole truth, I told right out, and felt the better for it. After my trial the prosecuting attorney made a speech in my behalf, recommending the judges to sentence me only for a short period. The man escaped: I was sentenced for two years—all of which you know I have served out, save seven days."

The young man who gave me this narrative, I am happy to say, became radically reformed in all his character while in prison. In a short time he learned to read, and, by the grace of God upon his heart, he was enabled to lead a life of peace and happiness.

Thursday. During the week ending to-day six prisoners have gone out, four by the expiration of their terms of commitment and two by the governor's pardon. Two of the four, who had served out their time, were foreigners, for whom I felt a deep solicitude. Both professed to be reformed, though I must own that I felt some misgivings for the elder one, whose previous habits of intoxication would possibly lead him into a snare again. He had, however—and the reader ought to know it—been a praying man for more than a year, and he promised me he would avoid temptation and try to save his immortal soul. The other was quite a lad, who actually felt *scared* when he got

to the big iron gate, with only one suit of thin clothes and four dollars in his pocket, and peeped out into the world, from which for many long and weary months he had been shut up, and into which he was now about to plunge. I parted with them in tears, commending them to the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Saturday. The boy who left on Thursday came back to-day to see me. He wanted a recommendation to some Christian Church, as, he said, he felt lonely in the world, and nobody seemed disposed to care for him or give him any thing to do. How cruel, let me repeat it, how utterly cruel is it, thus to thrust men from this penitentiary into a community where they are unknown, and where, if known, they are almost certain to suffer for want of employment! When will the time come for us to have places where discharged convicts can go and get work, and where a fair compensation for their labor will be given; so that while they are exercising their bodies, they will not be ruining their souls, and paving their way back to a second incarceration in the prison?

Sabbath, November 15. This morning, in reading the seventy-eighth Psalm, from the thirty-fourth to the fortieth verse, I was overwhelmed with the conduct of Israel and their great backslidings from God. I prostrated myself upon my knees, and prayed to my Maker that he would enable me wholly to consecrate myself to his service. Those inimitable lines, by Charles Wesley, on the Divine mercy, came to my mind. Here is a verse or two:

"Kindled his relentings are,
Me he now delights to spare:
Cries, 'How shall I give thee up?'
Lets the lifted thunder drop.

There for me the Savior stands;
Shows his wounds, and spreads his hands;
God is love! I know, I feel,
Jesus weeps, and loves me still."

Thursday, November 26. We lost one of our prisoners by death to-day. He came in last summer, and at the time was suffering from pulmonary consumption. Soon after his commitment he was confined to his bed, from which he never rose again. It was with great difficulty that I could get his mind fixed on religion, and specially upon the subject of his soul's salvation. He thought he should soon recover, and that then he could attend to the matter. Alas, how many poor souls in this world thus procrastinate their return to God, live and die in their sins and their blood, and then go to reap the reward of the sinner in the world of endless night and misery! The poor fellow, feeling at last that his time was short, began to pray and ask forgiveness of God; but he died at last with a cloud on his mind, and with scarcely a glimmering assurance that he was going to heaven.

Friday, December 4. I received a letter from D., one of our discharged prisoners. He had been imprisoned, for passing counterfeit money, for six years, all of which time he had faithfully served out. During his confinement I labored earnestly and faithfully with him for his soul's salvation, and when he left the prison he was seriously impressed, and told me that he would write me relative to his future course. His letter was written under date of September 16, Santa Fe, New Mexico. The revelations it gives of the corruptions and debaucheries of the Catholic society there, are too disgusting for recital. I wrote back D. a letter, warning him against indulgence in the prevailing sins of the place, and advising him, as soon as practicable, to turn his footsteps elsewhere, and hunt up a living amongst honest and honorable people.

Tuesday, December 8. I was informed to-day that two of my reformed young men, who had been some time previously discharged, were in Columbus on a short stay. I visited them and conversed with them, and, at parting, gave

them letters of recommendation to some of my friends. They were both Church members, and were doing well in the good cause of piety. May the Lord ever have them in his merciful care and keeping!

Sunday, December 13. Our Sabbath school was unusually interesting. At eleven o'clock services our room was crowded with visitors, and the word of God had free course and was glorified.

Christmas. To-day is Friday—a day of feasting and mirth with many in the world, but with us, in the walls of this lonely prison, a season of deep thought and prayer. The year is drawing to a close, and I feel a thousand thoughts of the past, pleasing and sad, rushing upon my mind. The future, too, is rising before me, and feelings of the uncertain nature of all earthly things come upon me. Here is the end of one year; but shall I live to see the close of another? Here I am, and others around me, with life, and strength, and health; but where shall we all be this time next year? These are questions which none but God can answer.

Sabbath (January 3, 1847) came to us in all the blandness and brightness of a spring morning. I was sent for to fill one of the pulpits of the Methodist Episcopal churches in the city—a thing which I did with extreme reluctance, as I had prepared myself to give my friends, the prisoners, a new year's discourse.

Saturday, January 9. Several have been liberated this week. B. was pardoned by the president. He had been a habitual drunkard. In his native village he had been a noisy politician and a postmaster. This last position was gained by his "disinterested labors in behalf of his beloved country," as some people would tell us. In a drunken spree he broke open a letter which he supposed contained a large amount of money. In this he was disappointed. There was but a solitary one-dollar bill in the letter. His crime

immediately became known. He was arrested, tried, sentenced, and committed for ten years. His friends, however, anxious to have him released, petitioned the governor, and, before he had been with us five months, he was pardoned. He told me, on leaving, that he would sacredly observe the pledge he had given me, never again to taste a drop of spirituous liquors; nevertheless, I felt perfectly satisfied that, if he but confederated once more with his former associates and companions, he would be almost certain to fall, and, as the consequence of his fall, he would be back to the penitentiary again.

Sabbath, January 10. I preached from Revelation xx, 12. Several members of the Legislature were present. I endeavored to present to view the certainty of a future judgment, and the necessity of future rewards and punishments. The occasion was one of interest and, I trust, of profit to all. I could not help thinking and saying to the forlorn prisoners before me, that, if Universalism were true, it would be the best possible policy for the warden to mix arsenic with their soup for dinner, so that they could all go to the world of rest before the setting of the sun, and that they might not any more have to work in the shops and yards of the prison. They seemed readily to understand my meaning; and I do not believe there was a man before me, with the text in his mind, but that despised the doctrine that all men—murderers and Christians—would reach the kingdom of heaven. Still, this theological monstrosity lives in the world, and has thousands for its abettors.

Tuesday, January 19. At my request one of the officers of the penitentiary drew up a schedule, showing the number of convicts in prison, their crimes, places of nativity, and the state of their education. Of the four hundred and forty-five in confinement at the time the paper was drawn up, it appears that two hundred and ninety-seven could read and

write, sixty-nine could read print only, thirty-seven had learned to read since their commitment to prison, and twenty-three could neither read nor write. Of the male convicts, one hundred and eighty-nine were married, two hundred and forty-seven single. Of the female convicts, eight were married and one single. Of the males, three hundred and ninety were whites and forty-six colored. Of the females, seven were whites and two colored. Of the four hundred and forty-five committed, the counties of Hamilton and Cuyahoga sent one hundred and ninety-three persons—the former one hundred and forty-six, the latter forty-seven. Of ninety-one commitments made, there were sixteen for grand larceny, twenty-one for horse-stealing, seven for burglary, and the remaining forty-four for various offenses—such as arson, forgery, bigamy, counterfeiting, mail-robbery, etc.

Saturday, January 23. To-day one of the convicts rebelled against the authority of an officer, and struck him with a billet of wood. The fellow is here on his second commitment, and he is a most wretchedly-wicked man. He is one of the few of the human race over whom the power of kindness seems to have but little effect. The reader, perhaps, knows such a one somewhere in the circle of his acquaintance. They are scattered here and there through the world; and, like a surly dog, they must be well whipped before they will submit to rule and government. I am saying but the truth when I record the fact, that a large majority of the prisoners were deeply mortified to learn of the brutal conduct of their fellow-convict, and felt themselves injured rather than honored by his ferocity.

Tuesday. A man by the name of R. was brought back to-day, who made his escape last summer. He was arrested in Pennsylvania, at the head of the Susquehanna. This is the fifth escape which has occurred within the past two years; and yet every deserter has been caught and brought

back in a short time after his desertion. R. often complained to me of the destitute condition of his family, and said that he wished, above every earthly thing, to go and see them; yet he had actually traveled many hundred miles directly from the place where his family resided, which, to say the least, was not a *very* profound proof of the sincerity and depth of his affection.

Monday, February 1. I received a letter this morning from a young man who was some months ago released from confinement, from which I learn that he is a member of a Christian Church and a teacher in the Sabbath school. The following is an extract:

"It is a matter of gratitude with me that my life is continued to me, and that I find favor in the sight of God and man. I experienced considerable mortification and delay in obtaining work. When it became known that I was previously a penitentiary convict, some people avoided me. This rather discouraged me; but I persevered, and endeavored honestly to tell the people who I was, what I had been, and what I was trying to be. As the result, I in some measure disarmed prejudice, and excited the sympathy of the more religious portion of the community. I am with a gentleman now, a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who is a strict and consistent worshiper of the Most High. He has family prayer, at which I am permitted to attend, and teaches his children the ways of truth and righteousness. I feel to thank God for the great goodness he has shown me in placing me with such a man; and I am determined to persevere in the narrow path, until I arrive safely in the kingdom of holiness and happiness on high."

Wednesday, February 17. I was strongly impressed today with the correctness of my previously-formed views respecting female depravity, while reading an account of the Sing Sing prison; though I must confess I have no

additional fault to find with our female convicts. It is not necessary, neither would it be easy, for one to tell *how* it happens that female convicts are generally more obdurate than male convicts. The fact is incontestible. Among other evidences of the corruption of this class of convicts, the report of the Sing Sing prison states, that at a certain hour on a certain day of the week, four female prisoners managed to get together, and after some attempts at amusement and villany, they took an oath in due form upon the Bible, that they would serve the devil and do the devil's work so long as God almighty suffered them to live! I forbear comments upon such cool blasphemy.

I am aware that in giving statements like these, I shall be looked upon as relating extreme cases. I am equally aware that some will consider me as rather opposed to females. This is not the case, however, by any means. I wish to be honest and to talk honestly. I give plain facts, and I leave them for the reader to reflect upon, and to draw his own conclusions about, without bringing forward prejudices and biases of my own. I believe that it is only in cases where females are utterly lost, that they show their rankling corruption and malignity as they do in prisons.

Sunday, February 28. This was one of the days of the Son of man. Under a deep sense of my responsibility to God, for the souls committed to my charge, I went from my closet to the chapel, and cried aloud, with Zachariah, "Turn you to the stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto you." The God of Jacob was with us, and many were the tears shed and the groans uttered for sin on this occasion.

Monday. I had a long talk with poor aged T. to-day. He is in his sixty-second year, and has been in prison for eighteen years. His crime was the murder of his brother in a drunken spree. He says he has no recollection whatever of having committed the crime. He is here for life,

and of all men he is most miserable. He is the personification of despair itself; and if the reader can conceive what this means, he will have a picture of this poor old man. He complained bitterly of his confinement—its irksomeness and monotony; and while he talked the tears came oozing out of his sunken eyes, coursing down his furrowed cheeks, stirring up my deepest sympathies for him. I thought if such be the irksomeness of a few years' confinement in this life, what must be the irksomeness and agony of everlasting confinement in hell! I left him, praying God to send conviction to his soul, and to save him from plunging into the prison-house of eternal perdition.

Will the reader bear with me while I repeat, that of the commitments for life in this prison, nearly all were cases of men who committed crime while wholly or partially intoxicated. This is something for reflection. When will rumsellers be viewed as they ought to be viewed—the wholesale murderers of our species? and when will they get the just deserts of their crimes? An incident occurred to-day, which brought this matter fresh to my mind. A lad from Cincinnati called at the prison to-day to see a friend of his, also a youth, who was in confinement. The latter, through some of his associates, became intoxicated; and while intoxicated, he committed a theft which soon found him a home in Columbus, with striped clothing for his wearing apparel, and thieves and murderers for his companions. Who was more to be blamed—the wretch who sold the brandy or the boy who drank it?

Thursday, March 4. I fell into a conversation with a convict who, for general and sound literary attainments, has few superiors in the world. He is here under aggravated circumstances, and I felt compassion for his fate; but it was impossible for me to do any thing for him, except to offer him some religious consolation, for which he seemed grateful.

Friday, March 19. We have some men in the prison,

as I have just intimated, whose literary attainments are of the first class. W. D. G. is one of this description. He enjoyed, in early life, the benefits of a common school education, and afterward spent several years in college, doing credit alike to himself and instructors. I obtained one of his letters to a distant friend, from which I make the following extract:

"Dear Friend,—In accordance with a promise made to you previous to your leaving Columbus, I send you the following lines. A prison is a dreary place—a place, the last on earth where life is to be enjoyed, and where nothing scarcely arises to break the monotony of an almost speechless existence. To live—to live, and eat, and act, and mingle with others of our race, and yet be debarred for ever from even uttering the welcome word or ordinary salutations of friendship, is dreadful indeed; and yet just such is life within the walls of this penitentiary. Occasionally, when my day's work is done, and I am locked securely up in my solitary cell, I find my heart, on memory's wing, going back to the innocence and quiet of my early existence. I see before me the hills and woods, where, with youthful friends, I frolicked the joyous hours of life away. I stand by the side of the stream that goes dancing along its tortuous course, and in whose waters I have dabbled, and I feel all the glow and enthusiasm of my boyhood days burning within me. There, too, stands the old school-house, with the huge elm by its side, keeping off the hot sunbeams in July and August, and breaking the fierceness of the blast in December and January. But my reverie does not continue long. The grating of some distant iron door, or the turning of a lock upon a fellow-prisoner, reminds me that I am the inmate of dungeon walls and desolation.

"The perfect isolation of a human spirit, it seems to me, is worse than death, and for this reason, that the Author of humanity has constituted us for intercourse, and every-

where in nature has provided us with scope and occasion to receive and communicate impulses of affection and of thought. Even in hell there is companionship. Though I would not in any sense indorse the blasphemy of the prince of blasphemers,

'Better to rule in hell than dwell in heaven,'

still I would prefer misery, with associates and companions in misery, than confinement in helpless solitude. In this latter state, a breathing man, gifted with voice and hearing, buried up in a silent, solitary sepulchre of stone, is tormented to utter madness by the clash of thoughts and passions that have neither aim nor object. The spontaneous phantasmagoria of the guilty spirit rise like unaccountable goblins, and it is just as impossible to repress them as it is to repress the beating of the heart or the respiration of the lungs.

"Solitary confinement, in its most dreadful sense, thank God! is not the characteristic of this prison, however much it may prevail elsewhere. We have here, it is true, to be locked up alone at night; but we have, at the same time, the privilege of conversing with the best of men, living and dead, not audibly, indeed, but through the medium of books. We have light in our cells, and a stool to sit upon, and any book that we may see fit to read. Above all, we have a faithful chaplain to converse with, the Bible as our constant companion, and God as the hearer of our prayers. You will be surprised, I know, to hear me talk about prayers in a state prison. Possibly you may sneer at it, and pronounce it all a delusion. Nevertheless, it is so; and I am wildly, immeasurably deluded, if real piety is not found within these gloomy walls. I do not wish to speak of myself. I have been a wicked man all my days. I have served but too faithfully the great father of evil, and have forgotten the goodness and mercy of God, who has ever watched over and cared for me; but God has

never forgotten me. Recently, how often have I repeated and felt the lines of the poet:

'O Thou, who dry'st the mourner's tear,
How dark this world would be,
If, when despised and hated here,
I could not fly to thee!'

The Scriptures are my chief comfort. They are always with, always delighting my soul. I cannot open on a single page but I see light and love. The parable of the prodigal son I read frequently. I cannot finish it without finding my heart subdued and softened. Our good chaplain has sometimes alluded to it in his discourses; but the slightest comment on it puts me into an agony of tears. O, how can my merciful and heavenly Father deign thus to touch my heart, and afterward to talk with and comfort me, who am the lowest of all his creatures!

"One thing has occupied my reflections to a great extent, of late; and though it has no relevancy to your case, I am induced to state it to you, that some good use may be made of it by yourself, whenever opportunity occurs. It is the wickedness and folly of parental disobedience, particularly disobedience of a mother's commands. Herein, when young, I greatly erred. I loved my mother as a great many other young men respect theirs. I tried to be somewhat obedient; but too frequently I treated her kindness with indifference, her requests with incivility, and her commands with positive disdain. I did not then consider my course flagrantly sinful or wrong; but my folly now, how palpable it is! and how keenly do I suffer for it! Will you, in your intercourse with any of my youthful acquaintances, remind them of the fact, that the surest way to ruin is through the gate of parental disobedience? Shakspeare has a fine passage, which, if I recollect rightly, runs thus:

'The poor wren,
The most diminutive of birds, will fight—
The young ones in her nest—against the owl.'

"The moral of this is fine. Parents will do any thing, undergo any sacrifices, for their offspring; but, alas! how few sons and daughters are willing to requite the care of a father, and the fondness of a mother, by strict obedience to their commands!

"Tell Charles, if you see him, how well off his old friend is. *Friend*, I say, for I hope that he still cherishes some faint regard for poor, fallen me, while he can be doubly assured that I now love *him* more than ever I did.

"He has long been undecided on the subject of religion. Difficulties and embarrassments have always been springing up in his path. He has had impressions of a very serious nature more than once. He has, I doubt not, many a time promised himself that he would lead a different life. Like Felix, he has felt, and feared, and trembled, but has said, 'Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will send for thee.' But he has lived on, and the convenient season has never arrived. It will never come to him. O, how often I fear that before he is ready Death will call for him, and take him to sleep in his cold charnel-house! How familiar, but O, how bitterly true, the lines of Young:

> 'Procrastination is the thief of time—
> Year after year it steals, till all are fled,
> And to the mercies of a moment leaves
> The vast concerns of an eternal scene!'

"Do not call me enthusiastic. Do not think that he will become exasperated at my importunity. Could you feel as I feel for him, you would not rest, until you knew that he had commenced the work of repentance and salvation.

"Tell him of the change that has come over me, and exhort him, by the mercy of Jesus Christ to yield himself entirely to the Lord. The days of the years of our pilgrimage are fast passing away. The dream of life will soon be gone; and shall we wake to immortal life or to everlasting condemnation and despair?

"I must close. I could write more, but I fear I have already taxed your patience too much. May I hope that you still remember me in your prayers, and that if we meet no more on earth we shall join each other in the kingdom of the redeemed; where Christ sitteth at the right hand of the Father, exalted a priest and a Savior for ever.

"Farewell, W. D. G."

Saturday, March 20. A young man aged eighteen years, a native of South Carolina, was brought in to-day, he having committed grand larceny. He seemed very cool and indifferent in regard to his fate. His mother was committed along with her son, a few months since, on a charge of having stolen a horse and buggy. The lad, I found, was the one who was really the thief, but the mother, out of pure compassion for her son, took the crime on herself, and he, graceless fellow, escaped. He did not, however, stay out long. How much better it would have been for him, temporally and spiritually, had he remained in the prison on his original commitment! A mother frequently, in her great love for her children, does them the greatest acts of injustice, when she deems she is doing them the greatest good.

Thursday, April 1. It is just one year to-day since my entrance as chaplain into the penitentiary of the state of Ohio. To me the year has been one of strange vicissitude. I look back with feelings of mingled pain and joy. I see in how many instances I have come short of my duty as a minister of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I see where opportunities have escaped of my doing good. I look around, and see vacant the places which some of my charge occupied when I came to the prison. Some are again in the busy scenes of life. Some are baffling successfully against the temptations of the world; and are endeavoring, in the strength of God's grace, to obtain eternal life. Others, I fear, by indulging in sin, are paving their way back to the silence and solitude of this gloomy prison. Many are still

serving out their appointed time—some with sorrowful, others with joyful hearts.

I look again. Some who were with us twelve months ago are sleeping that deep and dreamless slumber to which in this world no waking comes. Above their graves the storms of life beat cold and wild. But the sleepers awake not. Death, "dread watcher of the marble corpse," has claimed them as his prey; and, "dust to dust," their bodies are mingling with their mother earth.

You, too, reader, have gone with me in my recital of my year's toil. You have seen how gradual is the course of crime, and how easy a thing it is to go down from honor, and innocence, and virtue, to degradation, and shame, and sorrow. Many a one in early life was buoyant with hope, who is now reaping the reward of his own undoing. And many a one now, though full of expectation and joy, by a course of crime may before a year's time be an inmate of the state prison. What a theme for reflection is here, and what need have all to guard their evil hearts against the first advances of sin! My youthful readers, beware, let me beseech you, beware of the beginnings of evil. In this is your only safety. One false step may ruin you. One wrong act may keep you wrong for life. A spark is a small thing; but a spark may kindle a conflagration. A drop is a small thing, too; but drops make the ocean.

In closing these memorials, I can but return my warmest thanks, alike to the officers of the prison and to all connected therewith, for the kindness and the aid shown me during all my labors as chaplain. Particularly to Colonel Dewey, warden, and Captain Samuel Bradford, deputy warden, do I confess my indebtedness. That God may ever have them and theirs, and all my readers, in his merciful keeping, is the fervent prayer of the author.

THE END.

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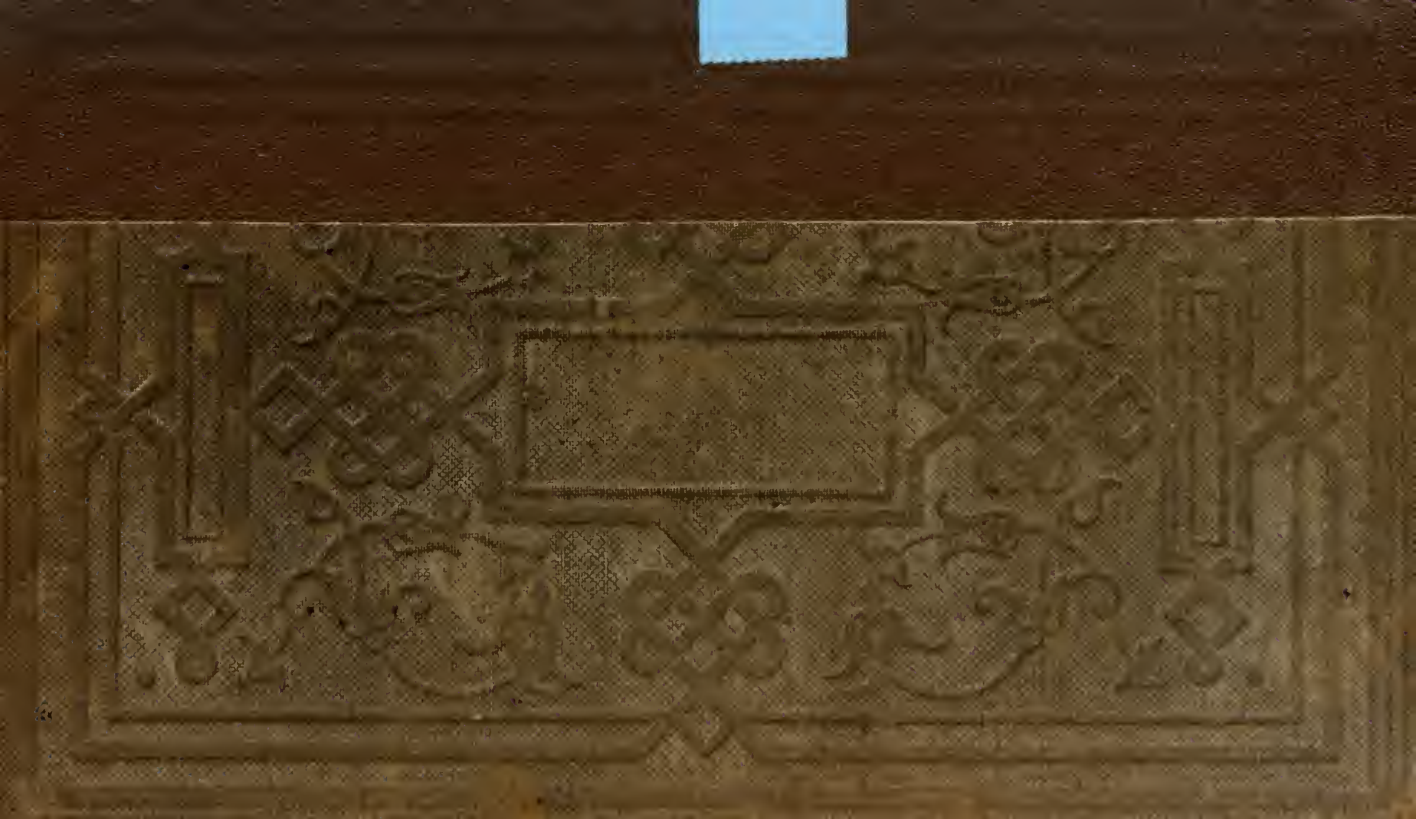
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